

The New Crusades – Chapter 13

“Crap, I was hoping to get some of the people who set off the nuke.”

“Ronald, we’d have been lucky to get anyone, let alone the people behind those bombings. I know for a fact that not all of the Muslims in this country are terrorists. I would hazard to guess that many of them came here for the same reason our ancestors did, to start over in a country with true opportunity. I’m more than willing to make an exception to that when it comes to the people from south of the border. If the Mexican government had its act together, they sure wouldn’t come here.”

“I don’t know Gar-bear, they do pretty good here and manage to send a lot of money back home.”

“Do you want to go down Angeles Crest for a practice session?”

“I suppose, is Lance going?”

“I’ll ask.”

Lance said if I’d give a few minutes to let him get his things together he’d be more than glad to join us. When he showed up, he had Dave Lucky with him.

“Mind if I tag along?”

“Not at all, do you have your own rifle?”

“All I have is a single shot 12 gauge and a .22 rifle.”

“You can try ours and if you find something you like, we’ll see what we can work out. Basically Dave, we all have a .30 caliber rifle and a .223 caliber rifle. We tend to favor the pump shotgun although some go with the Remington 11-87. You’ll see, with the red dot sights, these are fairly easy to shoot.”

On the way to Angeles Crest, Lance ran over the fundamental safety rules for handling firearms. When we arrived, we set up targets at 7 yards, 25 yards, 100 yards, 250 yards and 600 yards. Since the trip had been Ron’s idea, he went first, starting with the hand cannon of his, the .41 magnum. Next he ran a few rounds through his .375 and finally his M1A. When his shoulder couldn’t take any more, Lance led Dave through the various targets, handguns and rifles. For someone who didn’t claim to know much about firearms, I suggest that Dave did very, very well.

Lance followed and I was tail end Charlie. I so wanted to make a shot at 600 yards but Geraldo was safe this day. It was only important that I could shoot very well out to combat range (300 meters) anyway. All my shots were in the black, but I needed more prac-

tice with my rifles. Two hours on the range and failing light persuaded us to call it a day. On the way home, we stopped by High Desert Storm.

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“Hi, sweetheart,” Ron said. “What sizes of ammo have you gotten in recently?”

“Ron, it’s been very hard to get any kind of ammo, those survivalists must be stocking up. I have 9mm, .45ACP, .45 Colt, .223, .308 NATO, 30-06 and 3 boxes of .375 for your rifle.”

“Dave here decided he wants a M1A like the rest of us, do you have one?”

“I have 2 Loaded models with synthetic stocks. They’re fitted with the Bushnell 73-0135 trophy riflescopes and 10 round magazines.”

She then leaned across the county and whispered something to Ron.

“You’re kidding, really?”

“Have you ever known me to lie to you?”

“Can you fit them? We have all of our rifles in the pickup.”

“How many rifles?”

“Four .30 calibers and 3 .223s. Dave will probably take 10 of those LEO only mags. How much ammo can we get?”

“One case per person in each caliber he needs.”

“Dave, did you bring your checkbook?”

“Yes, why?”

“You’ll need it, that’s why. Lance, you and Gary get the weapons and I’ll work something out with Sandy in terms of price.”

“They’ll be ready at 4pm. Dave, do you want the standard or a Loaded?”

“What do you guys have?”

“Loadeds, they have better sights, better barrels and much better trigger.”

“More expensive?”

“A little, but they’re worth it.”

“What gives, partner?”

“She has the improved flashhiders.”

“Surefire?”

“Absolutely. She’ll install them on the .223s and the .308s. We’ll have to return to the range tomorrow and adjust our sights; you know they’ll shoot higher.”

I don’t know, but I suspect she swapped out the barrels on the mini-14s. That was faster than installing the M4-FA flashhider on that particular rifle. While we waited, we went to our house for coffee. I must have been grinning from ear to ear; Sharon picked up on it immediately.”

“What are you smirking about?”

“Sandy is installing new flashhiders on our rifles and Dave just joined the club. He didn’t pick a handgun, but she had a couple of good used M1911s.”

“What else are you buying?”

“A little more ammo, Sandy just got some in.”

“I suppose I should go to the range with you, I need to practice too.”

“We have to go back tomorrow, do you have the time?”

“I can make the time, how long will we be gone?”

“About 3 hours.”

“Morning or afternoon?”

“After lunch ok with the 3 of you?”

“After lunch.”

“I’ll need muffs.”

“I don’t think so, but I’ll pick up a pair for you. You really should have something a little bigger than the .32.”

“Like what?”

“Do you remember my Browning Hi-Power?”

“The one I couldn’t jack the slide on?”

“I’ll teach you a trick and you’ll be able to do it. We have to be back at Sandy’s around 4, can I have the checkbook please?”

“Iowa or Kalifornia?”

“Whichever has the most money in it.”

“Iowa. You disability payments got caught up on Wednesday, but don’t spend it all in one place.”

“When did we change to having them deposited to the Iowa account?”

“A few weeks back, don’t you remember?”

(I didn’t) “Oh that’s right, I signed some papers, right?”

“Yes.”

“Sandy, I want to buy Sharon a Browning Hi-Power, used but in good condition.”

“I think I have just what you want, Gary. It has an extended barrel.”

“Do you have a flashhider for it?”

“Yep.”

“How about a barrel and a flashhider for my PT1911?”

“Yep.”

“I hope I have enough for ammo too; say how about those LEO mags for the Hi-Power?”

“I have 5.”

“Hot dam. Why don’t you start with Dave and then Lance, Ron and me.”

“Whatever.”

In this case a flashhider was otherwise known as a suppressor. They make perfect flashhidiers. The only thing we filled forms out on was actual firearms purchases, Sandy wasn’t a class III dealer. The Surefire suppressors might not be the best, but they have

a guaranteed life of 30,000 rounds. They should be installed by a gunsmith because they come with shims to make the FA attachment fit properly. I ended up spending the better part of 3 grand and that was with a 30% discount on the flashhiders. We stopped by White Surplus and I picked up a holster and 2 mag pouches for Sharon's new pistol mags.

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"What are you going to do with the .32?"

"Amy doesn't like guns and hasn't since '83 when she had the gun accident. Either you can carry it in your purse or I'll use it as a backup."

"I can take the .22."

"Ok, I'll take the .32."

I showed Sharon the new flashhiders and I'm afraid she'd seen too much TV; she knew exactly what they were. It didn't take her long to ask why I thought we needed silencers.

"Well, in the first place they're quiet, not silent and in the second place they contain most of the gasses and really are excellent flashhiders."

But, they're illegal in Kalifornia."

"Sharon, everything is illegal in Kalifornia. Do you realize that if Prop 86 had passed cigarettes would run over \$50 a carton?"

"Really? I'm beginning to rue the day we moved here."

"You and me both. I'd give anything to be able to move. At the moment, we'd be lucky to get much over \$165 for the house, less the commission leaving us about \$60 clear. It might be a good time to sell with all the homes destroyed in LA."

"Are you serious?"

"Absolutely, we could move to Fredonia and get an apartment until we could find a home. They might have a trailer park and if they don't we could try and buy a lot and use the home as collateral."

"Let me think on it. When would you want to move?"

"As soon as the weather permitted. Are there any Muslim or gangs in Fredonia?"

"Can't be many, it's pretty small. Russ said just to emphasize our Iowa roots and not mention Kalifornia. With Dave armed now, it's not like the tract won't have a few de-

fenders. There must be a bunch of LDS in the area, they have 6 churches. We should fit in nicely; we have enough food for the two of us for a year.”

“I might try and talk to a realtor tomorrow and see what we’d need to do to get the maximum value out of the house.”

“You do that and keep me posted. You can do it after we get back from the range.”

“Did you get me muffs?”

“Ear plugs, same difference.”

“What about ammo?”

“Ball. She had to order the Gold Dot.”

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For someone who hadn’t shot a gun since before we were married, Sharon’s results were acceptable. Lance continued to work with Dave and Ron only fired enough rounds to adjust his aim point. Sharon soon discovered that the Mini-14 had little if any recoil and the flashhiders worked as advertised. By this time, I feel it safe to say her conversion was nearing completion.

As far as selling the house, it had several attractions, a generator, and new freezer in the shelter, was nicely landscaped and sported new linoleum and a fresh coat of paint. The realtor suggested we ask \$300,000 because of the extras. Finally a family showed up looking for a replacement for their Studio City home and ours was just what they wanted. Escrow closed in little over 3 weeks and we loaded our things on a mover and asked for them to be stored in Flagstaff until we found a new home.

“I’m sure going to miss you.”

“Ron, if we can find something nice, you really ought to consider giving Fredonia a try.”

“No, I think we’ll probably try Cedar Hill. We’re going to pay off the house and move as soon as the estate settles.”

“As soon as I get a new phone number, I’ll send you an email.”

“Do they have ADSL?”

“Won’t know until we get there. This will give me a chance to try out a few ideas I have about building a home. It will mean building a deep basement and setting the house on runners over the basement.”

“Will you have enough money?”

“About 180, it should be more than enough.”

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We'd never even been to Fredonia, it seemed strange moving to a town you'd never even visited, but I had a list of relatives of a good friend of mine, I could maybe look up after we got to town and settled in. On the way, we stopped in Flagstaff, we both needed Arizona driver's licenses and it was a good place to shop for a mobile home. I knew without looking what I wanted, a Fleetwood Beacon Hill plan D; I'd studied all of the plans for stories I written.

I'd experimented with various methods of sheltering in previous missives and this time I was going to use a tested design, with a modification. One of the secrets to have a safe shelter is to make it unobtrusive. We bought 2½ acres and looked it over until we had the view we wanted. I got a well driller from Kanab to put in a deep well and an excavator to remove soil for a 90x40x20' deep hole. He recommend a company to pour concrete walls and we set about constructing a shelter aka basement 32' wide and 80' long. I explained to the second contractor exactly what I had in mind, drains that ran off to a black water tank equipped with a sewage pump that would pump the contents up to our septic system.

He had a gleam in his eye and chuckled but said, “Fine where does the blast door go?”

“I've got to call Sharon Packer in Salt Lake and order some stuff.”

“We can't pour the last wall until you get that Andair blast door you know.”

“I know, I've read about it.”

“Where are you from?”

“Iowa, why?”

“Couldn't tell, you have Arizona plates, but you almost act like a Californian.”

“Oh, you mean the People Republic? I was stationed there when I was in the Air Force and again when I worked for the state of Iowa.”

“I'll call her for you, what size of air filter?”

“AV-150, with a couple of spare filters. Know where I can get a generator?”

“What kind?”

“Onan or Kohler, 1,800 rpm, gaseous.”

“How big?”

“100 amp service at 240 volts.”

“Any preference?”

“Last one I had was a Onan RS 15000 with a pair of 3,000 gallon tanks that were buried.”

“Want the same thing?”

“I’d prefer a diesel like Kohler.”

“Are you going to live in that shelter?”

“No, once it’s done, were adding risers to set a mobile home on.”

“I’m not a fulltime concrete contractor, I’m a general contractor. Let me warn you, you’re going to need to put some of the stuff in that shelter before we pour the lid.”

“I was going to order a 25ft³ Sears freezer, the VA-150 and the generator and have them ready when you were ready to pour.”

“You tell me what you want and I’ll get it, we get a commercial discount.”

“LDS?”

“Yep, you?”

“Methodist. My wife’s a Lutheran.”

“Do you have blueprints or drawing of what you’re talking about one those risers?”

“I’ll show you.”

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We were delayed a month while we accumulated the things we needed to complete the shelter. John and I spent a fair amount of time discussing the various aspects of the shelter I had in mind, like the access ramp and storage tanks. He being a contractor was able to find me a 10,000-gallon propane tank, an oversized septic system and a 5,000-gallon water tank. He also asked if I thought of putting solar panels on the front side of the south facing house. I explained that the panels were expensive and a person needed a large battery bank and inverters, all of which cost money.

“Gary, I get a tremendous discount on that stuff, even the batteries. I can install a large enough system to keep you going for some time. You might want to consider a 10kw wind turbine for cloudy days.”

“Can we afford it?”

“I think you can, it’s not that expensive and you will already have the batteries and inverters. Most of the time you’re likely to have enough power to export some. As far as those risers go, I’ll need to increase the size of the posts in the basement, they will be carrying the weight. Why 10’ risers?”

“I’ll need 8’ of soil for protection and enough room to work under the house installing the pipes and electricity.”

“What kind of home did you buy?”

“Fleetwood with the desert package.”

“How many fireplaces?”

“Three.”

“You’re going to need firewood. With 3 fireplaces you can probably heat the home.”

“That’s a lot of ash to haul, but if it comes to that, I’d rather have it and not need it than the other way around.”

“We start pouring tomorrow. You’ll be able to arrange to have your mobile home delivered in about 3 weeks. Have you been to Utah before?”

“I went to Salt Lake City several times and to Hyrum once. Have a friend in Payson.”

“How did you decide on Fredonia?”

“My friend Russ has several relatives here in town, last names are Pratt and Brooksby.”

“Russ Williams?”

“Yes.”

“Well, I’ll be darned.”

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A month later we were just finishing up, the moving company brought the small amount of furniture we kept, it was oak and we'd been to Kanab and gotten some new furniture. John spent time with me until I understood how the electrical system worked and what I needed to do to keep it going. He even suggested a local I could get to come out and service everything if that's what I wanted.

One of the down sides to moving was losing all of the frozen meat. We left it in Palmdale divided among Lorrie and Amy and even sold some of it to our friends. Sharon found a meat packer and we bought a full Angus beef, half for the shelter and half for the house. She was busy as a bee, working hard to finish spending the money we cleared on the house so she could start on our pensions and my disability. Her sewing room occupied the entire activity room and I got the Study and the Den. We only had 2 bedrooms, the master and one guestroom.

It didn't take more than a month after we'd moved in to be back to normal. The majority of the residents were LDS, it was a very nice little town. I guess I'd better explain about the basement access. It was a ramp that started near the back door and turned the corner at the west end of the house, ran the full length of the front and turned the corner again to the east. My wheelchair was only rated for a 5-7% grade and although it cost more, I could get up and down without assistance. The other benefit was that radiation doesn't turn corners.

With 2½ acres, I figured we could have a garden every summer and can a few things. I ordered a 30 quart All American Pressure Canner and a few cases of pint and quart jars. Then I went to the Ark Institute and got several packages of their heirloom seed assortments. I watched the paper and got a good used garden tiller. I didn't need a lawn mower, we went with desert landscaping.

We were getting there, but we weren't quite done. My call sign is KD6GDQ and I had no radio equipment. I drove myself to AES in Lost Wages and Sharon came along for the ride. I knew exactly what I wanted and we weren't there for more than 2 hours, about 3 rolls of dimes for Sharon at the casino.

My purchases included 2 Kenwood TS-2000, a scanner, an assortment of vertical aeri-als, 1,000' of RG-213U, connectors, lightening arrestors and a weather station that could be wireless or hardwired. I wanted one more antenna but they didn't carry it so I ordered it from HRO, the MJF-1798 vertical.

John got me an electrical pole, a big one and we mounted all of the antennas and a radio guy from Kanab put the connectors on the cable and hooked in the antennas. Once the pole was set, he drove a heavy ground rod into the ground and connected the Alpha Delta arrestors. The remaining coax was fished through a conduit and into the shelter where I sat up Sharon's old computer table as a radio center. In no time at all, I was on the air, listening.

The New Crusades – Chapter 14

“This place has an echo.”

“It’s empty, what do you expect?”

“It’s not empty, we have the insulated mechanical room, my gun case, the radio table and piles and piles of food.”

“Were you planning on sleeping on the concrete floor?”

“Hey, Rome wasn’t built in a day. I ordered some inflatable mattress from Wally World.”

“Do you plan on me cooking on a camp stove?”

“John ordered one of those combination sink, stove, oven and refrigerators. It’s not like we can run to Staples and get a bunch of folding tables and chairs cheap.”

“Did you run a cable TV connection?”

“Of course. A little at a time dear, it’s complicated having solar panels, a wind turbine and a generator to keep straight. I think I’m too old for this stuff.”

“You seem to have time to play with your radios.”

“Just trying to figure out all of the controls, that’s all.”

“Do you want me to go to Staples online and order tables and chairs?”

“I suppose. Get 8’ tables and 10 chairs per table. I figure we’ll need about 4 tables.”

I’d already looked them up and the melamine tables ran \$50 and the chairs came in sets of 4. The chairs ran about \$10 each. The Wally World air mattress were twin/king sets that could be used doubled up or unfolded. We had spent more than planned and had just about finished off the house money and were looking at the disability, pension and trust fund to pay for outfitting the basement.

“I want some privacy if you’re planning on a whole lot of people.”

“I suppose you want a real bed, too?”

“Now that you mention it, yes.”

“Ok, you go to Kanab and get an inexpensive bedroom set. I’ll get John to throw up a wall for a bedroom or three. We don’t need lifetime mattresses, we may never sleep on them. Just get something comfortable but inexpensive.”

“Should I get 3 sets?”

“If they’re cheap enough.”

“Did you replace the KIO₃?”

“I bought 50 bottles, which should last a lifetime.”

“Did you install the CD V-717?”

“What is this 64 questions? Yes dear, I did. Did you buy more pinto beans, rice, macaroni and coffee? Did you buy 30 bundles of toilet paper and a full case of Kool’s? When are they going to deliver the beef, pork and chicken?”

“Are you planning on putting a TV down here?”

“Absolutely, but it has to be a Panasonic.”

“Why?”

“I can’t hear the Phillips you bought. We’re going to need to move all of the movies down here too, just in case.”

“What else do you want?”

“I was thinking about a gun rack filled with rifles, shotguns and handguns.”

“Like what?”

“Carlos Hathcock used a M2HB to snipe Charlie during the Vietnam War; that might be nice.”

“What exactly is a M2HB?”

“A 50 caliber machine gun.”

“Forget it.”

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What I needed to find was a cooperative gun dealer who could get me gas piston M16 type rifles and a reasonable supply of M1As. What’s more, he had to deeply discount the stuff or there would be no way I could ever afford it. I was getting a very late start on putting together what I felt was an appropriate arsenal and I hadn’t even thought about my cowboy guns or a .50 caliber sniper rifle. We only had the single vehicle, the used

Dodge Ram 3500 diesel but I wanted our own fuel supply just in case TSHTF, again. I'm a firm believer in the rule of 3s. According to the rule of threes, bad things happen in threes and it's exponential, and goes from 3 to 9 to 27."

We had 2 left because of the terrorist bombing. If the Nation of Islam, that Farrakhan bunch, joined with the 6-10 million Muslims, we'd be up to our hind ends in radical Muslims. We'd have a new Civil War and it would be the Christians and Jews vs. Islam. I shuddered at the thought, but planned to be ready, whatever it took.

"John who do you know who could get me M1As and AR-15s? The brand on the AR-15s doesn't really matter, what does matter is that I can get them for very little over the dealer cost."

"What you're asking is do I have a relative who is a gun dealer who will settle for a small fee for the guns?"

"I guess so, if that's what it will take. I've heard that the markup on guns is about 40%. That means I should be able to buy a M1A standard models for about \$1,000 and ARs for about \$700 if I could find a sympathetic dealer. I'll also have to get magazines cheap, maybe Ammoman or maybe someone else."

"Say I knew someone, what's in it for me?"

"Well, how about a place to stay if TSHTF again and weapons to use, assuming you come up short?"

"How many do you want?"

"Six of each rifle plus 6 shotguns and about 12 of the PT1911s."

"Big money."

"Not counting the ammo and magazines it is. But I'll, we'll need plenty of those/that too."

"You really are into this survivalist thing aren't you?"

"I'm about as close to an LDS as you'll find in the Methodist Church."

"We accept converts."

"Thanks, but not thanks, I don't believe I'm ready for that step just yet. Anyway do you know someone?"

"Say I do, can you come up with the money?"

“At the prices mentioned, it would run \$6,000 plus \$4,200 plus \$1,200 plus \$6,000 plus magazines and ammo. What would you say, maybe \$20 grand for everything?”

“That depends on what you got for ammo, as much as anything.”

“I lean towards military surplus as long as it’s all the same lot number.”

“And you can come up with that kind of money?”

“Maybe, one time only.”

“Gary, I’d suggest you think in terms of 4 each on the rifles and maybe go with the Loaded models on the M1As. You would want to go with good scope mounts and reasonable sights, maybe a good sight, like Bushnell.”

“I’m open minded, on numbers, but my top end on money is \$20 grand. My personal rule of thumb has been 5,000 rounds of ammo per rifle, 1,000 rounds of shotgun ammo, and 2,000 rounds of pistol ammo.”

“Ok, I agree with you on the ammo. How close are you to that?”

“Four thousand 7.62 NATO and 2,000 5.56 personally but I have a case each of 12 gauge slugs, 12 pellet 00 and 1,000 rounds each of Gold Dot .45 ACP and 9mm.”

“Right, you’re short on rifle ammo, aren’t you?”

“How did you know? Yes, I only have ~4,200 rounds of 7.62 and ~2,000 rounds of 5.56.”

“My wife asked your wife. You’ll need 3 each of the rifles and shotguns plus only 9 hand guns to stay within your budget with the amount of ammo you need. You need 17,500 rounds of 7.62 NATO and 18,000 of 5.56 NATO, another 4,500 rounds of .45 ACP and 750 rounds each of 12 gauge slugs and 00. Do you want those fancy flashhiders on the rifles and pistols?”

“My wife has a big mouth. You know about those?”

“Small town, but you made some good choices.”

“Does everyone in Fredonia know my business?”

“You mean that you were born in California, raised in Iowa, moved here from California, don’t much care for Iowa anymore, are a recovering alcoholic with 8 years plus and have been into preparedness since you were a kid? No, we didn’t spread it around, especially the California part. Although it counts in your favor that you wised up and left.

Bad things are happening in LA and other parts of the country. How long have you wanted to have a bomb shelter?"

"Since I was a teenager. I've always had a thing for cowboy guns; did she tell your wife that too?"

"Beretta Stampedes in .45 Colt ok?"

"Original Ruger Vaqueros?"

"Matching rifle?"

"Winchester or Marlin?"

"Winchester."

"Cowboy ammo or full loads?"

"A little cowboy until I get used to the gun. I'll need leather."

"Sharon already ordered it for you."

"4⁵/₈" and 7¹/₂."

"I heard."

"Where's the horse?"

"Salina? She told that story too?"

"Who was Kathy?" (My mid-life crisis)

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"Did you tell them my short size too?"

"Those things just sort of came out."

"I hope you bought cheap furniture for the shelter, I'm committed to spending \$20,000 on guns and ammo."

"I did very well"

"Do you want an AR-15 or to keep the Mini-14?"

"I'm used to it now; I'll stay with what I have."

“What else did you tell John’s wife?”

“Rachel? Not much, we just talked for a while.”

“Did you really order me holsters for a pair of guns?”

“Did I get it wrong? A 4⁵/₈” in the cross draw and a 7¹/₂” in the strong side, original model Ruger Vaqueros, right?”

“Right. Fitzpatrick Leather Co. in Laredo.”

“Yes, but I didn’t get the one with the Conchos.”

“I didn’t want them anyway. How long will it take to get here?”

“A few days.”

“I’ll need the checkbook or a check made out for \$20,000. That should cover everything John is getting.”

“What are you getting that costs that much?”

“Six rifles, 3 shotguns, 9 handguns, flashhiders, extra magazines and ammo. That includes a Winchester and the Rugers.”

“We’d better watch our spending; we’ll be down to \$6,000.”

“I’m done how are you doing?”

“Unless something comes up, we’re fully stocked on food and everything we need.”

“Did you get the cigarettes?”

“Sixty cartons?”

“That’s right.”

“That guy on the reservation ordered them and I paid the extra \$4 a carton Arizona tax. They were still cheaper than any store.”

“I like this cable internet service, it’s faster than the ADSL.”

“Did you send Ron an email?”

“I guess I’d better do that.”

I sent it but it bounced. I assumed that meant that Linda's father had died and they had moved to Cedar Hill. I was sure that Ron would rather risk thin air than a group coming up from LA and plundering the Antelope Valley. The air was thin in Fredonia (1,435m) too but I was getting along. I told Sharon that we'd have to make a run over Cedar Hill soon, weather permitting. When John brought the guns, I put in a rifle rack like the ones you saw in TV westerns and used a vinyl coated chain through the trigger guards to keep the guns in the rack. I had so much ammo I reasoned that it had to be stored and bought a second office cabinet. The handguns were on a shelf in the cabinets and the long guns in the rack. The rest of the cabinets held ammo, case and cases of it.

I frequently bring up the Dragon Skin controversy. I recently saw a demonstration of the product and that's the one I'm going to buy. One vest took 26 direct hits from a 7.62x39mm rifle followed by an additional 120 hits from an MP5 and not one bullet penetrated. The cover was ripped to shreds but had a man been wearing it he'd have lived to fight another day. I've seen tests of the Interceptor with the ceramic plates and it wouldn't have survived that kind abuse. You can buy the Dragon Skin but the Interceptor is military only.

If you've been keeping track, I'm short the body armor and one firearm, the .50BMG rifle. I'm also a bit short on M67 hand grenades, M72 LAW rockets, C4 and M18A1 Claymores. By the time you buy the M82A1M, 10 spare magazines, a Swarovski PV 6-24x50 and Raufoss ammo, you could have bought one of the cheaper compact cars. Getting the 25mm upper would be impossible unless I resorted to theft and I didn't think I should go there. But, I recently heard about the Tac-50 and may go that way.

Sharon said we had 6 grand, which meant I could either try to raise more money or forget it. For the moment, I decided to put it off; other things were commanding great attention. Moreover, things had died down for the moment and there hadn't been anything that the government identified as a terrorist event. Bush was running the country from Offutt AFB near Omaha and Cheney had gone underground again, just like he did after 9/11. My gut was going over time, either my ulcers were acting up or something was about to go down.

"Hi Dad, how are you?"

"Derek? I got to tell you, my gut is driving me crazy."

"Is it your ulcers?"

"I'm taking my Prevacid, I don't think so."

"What's that new town like?"

"Smaller than Gassville, quiet, nice people."

“Made any friends?”

“Our contractor John and I get along very well. I’ve gotten the armory in the shelter finished. I have 3 more M1As, 3 more Mini-14s, 3 more 590A1s, 9 more PT1911 .45s and about a ton of ammo.”

“Schools out soon, we thought we run out and see you. How do I get there?”

“Drive to Flagstaff and turn north on 89. Take that to 5 miles or so south of the Utah border. Don’t blink or you’ll miss it.”

“Where do you live?”

“Stagger Mountain Road, we’re in Mohave County. It wasn’t until we bought it when we determined why the land was so cheap, it about a half day to the County seat in Kingman. We’re on one of the roads to the Kaibab Res. Look for a new Fleetwood home and a well building.”

“I don’t know just when, but we’ll be there soon.”

“Driving?”

“Yeah, why?”

“Bring your boy toys, all of them. Ammo and magazines too.”

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“Damon, Dad. What’s happening?”

“Same stuff, different day.”

“Your brother ever buy you that shotgun?”

“Yes, one of these days I’ll get some ammo.”

“You don’t have any?”

“I have 25 rounds of 00 and 10 rounds of slugs.”

“I just talked to Derek; they’re coming to visit when school is out. I might be able to get a group rate at a motel or you can always sleep in the shelter.”

“You built a shelter?”

“It’s as big as our house. In fact, our house sits on top of it.”

“I don’t know if we can come.”

“I’ll send you gas money. Any problem with Muslims in your area?”

“Not that I know of why?”

“Louis Farrakhan issued a statement from his sick bed urging the Nation of Islam to unite with their Islamic brothers.”

“And you’re in one of your circle the wagon moods?”

“Is that what you call it?”

“I’ll bring all of my shotgun shells.”

“Good, but don’t forget your shotgun.”

“Sharon, why don’t you invite Amy and Lorrie to come visit when school is out?”

“Derek coming? Damon too? I’ll call them and then head to the grocery store. Where are we going to put them?”

“I’ll call the motel and see about a group rate.”

That was the other reason people weren’t too happy when we moved, it was the winter.

I did manage to find a nice spot to put in a garden. I ran my new used rototiller over it twice, and then spent most of a day picking up rocks. I took a day off and then raked it. We bought tomatoes and green pepper sets in Kanab and I put in 4 rows of green beans. Sharon did the onions, carrots, lettuce, radishes, peas and left the rest for me. I got some of those spuds my neighbor planted back in Iowa, Kennebec. They’re a high yielding fast growing variety, widely adapted. Requires close planting (15 to 20 cm between plants) and vine killing to avoid producing oversized and rough tubers. Excellent storage quality. Long dormancy period. High total solids. I had to put in seed corn, watermelons and cantaloupe and those cucumbers that were just perfect for making pickles.

“Do we have enough jars?”

“I don’t know, I can always order more from Canning Pantry.”

“Would you rather have too many jars and not need them or need more jars and not have them?”

I got on the phone; this survivalist thing was rubbed off a bit too much. I order 20 cases each of quarts and pints and 3 cases of lids. It is said that the average canner uses about 540 jars per canning season (Walton Feed Forum) and we would have a total of 80 cases or 960 jars. I checked every case when they came in and called them back for the replacement jars, just like I'd done the first time. The upside was when we began canning; we could put the cooled jars back in the boxes and label the boxes. After we'd eaten the contents and washed the jars, we could still store them in the shipping boxes, win-win. I think our new motto was going to be, "Don't chip the lips!"

o

It turned out to be late in June, actually closer to Independence Day before they all showed up. I asked them, one at a time, if they had any trouble. Their answers didn't vary much, roadblocks, on average, one per 100 miles. They weren't search vehicles, depending upon the occupants, but photo ID was mandatory, except for the kids. Derek used his military ID and Mary gave up her Arkansas license, they had no trouble. Damon had slightly more trouble because the kids were just at the age where Britney had a driver's license, Aaron a learners permit and Eric had a school ID. Amy's ID from the LA County Sheriff and Lorrie's California ID, didn't slow them down a bit. Except for the fact that once they hit Arizona, the questions always included, "Moving here or just visiting?"

Maybe I started something, who knows? Damon and Derek must have hit every Res cigarette store in eastern Arizona, they sure weren't short on smokes. We talked it over and they wanted to see the shelter. After they looked it over, they decided to stay here rather than at a motel. I called the motel, apologized and cancelled the reservations.

"Jeez, Dad, you're ready for WW III."

"Gee, I hope so. Actually, I'm thinking something akin to the Civil War, with the Christians and Jews against Islam."

"I think that explains it," Derek said.

"Explains what?"

"You remember how the feds passed a law controlling the sale of ammonium nitrate that was never really enforced? Try to buy ammonium nitrate now without an ID."

"I didn't have to show an ID when I bought a bag to till into the garden."

"Where did you buy it?"

"Here in Fredonia."

"What did you buy?"

The New Crusades – Chapter 15

“10-10-10.”

“Try and buy a bag of 34-0-0.”

“I didn’t see any of that, but they had 46-0-0.”

“That’s urea, not ammonium nitrate. If you mixed that with diesel, you have an UFO, not ANFO.”

“Maybe I should, I’ve never seen an UFO.”

“I have some things in the pickup I need to store, where’s the armory?”

“Didn’t built one, I have a rifle rack and store the ammo and handguns in office cabinets. What do you have?”

“M116A1 hand grenade simulators. I also have some M185 Red Personnel Signal Flare kits in case you get lost in the woods.”

“What woods?”

“You know what I mean.”

“What is your situation on ammo, Derek?”

“About 5,000 rounds of 7.62 NATO, and 100 rounds of .30-30 plus a case of 9mm.”

“Damon, I assume you didn’t buy more ammo?”

“What for? I haven’t shot up what I have.”

“That .30-30 is a hunting rifle, would Mary like an M1A or a Mini-14? I assume the 9mm is your only handgun.”

“I’ll take the M1A, Gary.”

“Damon, do you think Aaron can handle the M1A? If he can, I’ll give him one and Britney a Mini-14. The other two Mini-14s will go to Lorrie and Amy. That will leave 3 shotguns, Derek and Amy one. There are PT1911 .45s in that cabinet along with 5 8-round magazines each. That’s more than enough to go around.”

“What about Eric?”

"I'll have to think about that, Damon, if I get him a firearm, sure as hell Audrey and Udell will want one. Maybe we'll look at the Ruger 10/22s, we'll see."

"What this?"

"Oh, that's a Fast Attach device Mary."

"Do you have one for a FN FAL?"

"Nope, but the spare M1A has one and it shoots the same ammo. Maybe you should keep the FAL as your backup rifle and take the other M1A."

"Why suppressed, Dad?"

"Best flashhider ever invented."

"Which adapters did you get?"

"The flashhider adapters. The suppressors are mostly intended for night fighting and they'll protect your vision."

"I suppose you bought ALICE rigs?"

"Not hardly, I got a wholesale price on Tac-Force chest rigs. They'll hold a dozen Mini-14 magazines or 8 of the M14 magazines. I got the tan ones but you can doctor them up any way you want. I still got pistol belts to carry your canteens, pistols and spare mags. I even have a Gadsden Flag around here somewhere."

"Did you buy those butt stock pouches I told you about?"

"They're in the cabinet."

"Grandpa, is the TV for movies or is it cable?"

"Both, Eric. It has a VHS/DVD player and is connected to the local cable network. The movies are on that shelf in Alphabetical order by title."

"What's in that room?"

"The standby generator, the 5kw backup so you can change the oil, a large battery bank and inverters. You'll also find a couple of cases of spare filters, several cases of oil and a few drums of gasoline to the small generator."

"It seems to me I seen this before."

"I used this setup in my story called, *Survival Story* and it worked so well, I just did it for real."

"In that story I came up with a pair M82A1M with the 25mm uppers."

"I can wait. But, considering my age, don't make me wait too long, you remember how that story ended?"

"It was a shame we couldn't find a boat, it could have been a real Viking funeral."

"As you can see, Missy is still alive so don't bury me yet. How long can you stay?"

"I have 2 weeks of vacation discounting travel time, Dad."

"I can stay for a month, Carrie said just to let her know."

"Lorrie doesn't work and Amy told her mother she had 2 weeks of vacation too."

"There isn't much privacy here."

"There are 3 bedrooms and the kids can sleep out in the big room. You can unpack your clothes and use the dresser and closet. There are some snacks in the little refrigerator and our old one, but don't eat it all and spoil your appetites."

"Was there much trouble in Kalifornia?"

"Not where we lived. Three of us tried to help out when the Muslims began raising hell but they wouldn't let us."

"Let me guess, Ron, Clarence and you."

"Close, Ron, Lance and me. Haven't seen Clarence in a long time."

"Who is this Clarence you always talk about?"

"Clarence Floyd, my friend and Ron's. He's a black man from Birmingham, Alabama with as many years sober and Ron and I put together. We were a tight group for a while and I wrote a whole series of Three Amigo stories. He retired from either LA or LA County then had a bypass operation plus a stroke in the recovery room. Ron and I quit going to meetings and we haven't seen him since."

"Where's Ron, Palmdale?"

"His number is disconnected; I figure he moved to Cedar Hill."

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I couldn't have been more wrong. Ron had a heart attack and died. Linda sold their home and moved in with her Dad in Newport Beach. She was saving her income to buy a home of her own after her father died. Her father, a multi-millionaire had bequeathed all but \$1,000,000 of his estate to the Masonic Order. Linda and her sister would each get ½ million when he died, which could be 2525, the way he was hanging on. Linda wasn't old enough to draw Social Security but her sister and she owned a factory building that gave them each \$5,000 a month in rent. I'm sure she filled a claim against Ron; they'd been married about 25 years.

I have no idea about Clarence, his number was disconnected too.

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“How are you fixed for backups?”

“What do you mean?”

“What if a bomb goes off nearby and you get a ground slap that ruins your septic tank or well? What if your generator fails? What if we get attacked by so many people we run out of ammo?”

“In that case, I planned to send you outside to fix it. Any other questions oh wise one?”

“For the money you spent, you could have bought a shelter system from Utah Shelter systems.”

“In a pig's eye, I could. Besides, I had to buy the blast door and air system from them. Anyway, we have those electrical panels on the roof and a few spares plus the wind turbine. One final point, their shelters are so popular they have a bit of a waiting period. I didn't want to wait. What's more I needed this concrete shelter as a base for the risers to set the house on. I have more reasons supporting this shelter than you have reasons against, so unless you have something constructive to add, SHUT UP.”

The world is filled with critics. You know the kind, they say you should have done it this way or you should have done that. I don't know what anyone was complaining about, we had 12' risers that allowed 120" of soil on top of the shelter overhead. Our protection factor was $31\frac{2}{3}$. Ten to the $31\frac{2}{3}$ power was >2,147,483,648. We were way over protected.

Besides, the only way we'd get any, repeat any, radiation here was if we had WW III and someone missed the target. If they were aiming for Flagstaff or Salt Lake City, they were way off target. I was pretty sure that Independence Day would be the occasion for more protests or riots. It could go either way; we Christians protesting the Muslims, the Muslims protest Christians and Jews or maybe the Mexicans protesting everyone. We were far enough out of town that even if some idiot tried to protest in Fredonia, we'd

never know it. I was still uneasy and was very happy that we had the family together for the first time in years.

I'm not an unfriendly person, just shy. I don't go out of my way to make friends, probably because of that shyness. My new best friend was John and that had nothing to do with his knowing someone who could help me get the weapons and ammo I wanted. He was simply put, just good people. He didn't hold my being a Methodist against me anymore that I held being an LDS against him. In this country, we can follow any religion we want. You can even be a Muslim, but these days, you might end up with a Grail Knight in your face saying, "He chose poorly."

One of the reasons we got along so well was because he was a good contractor who didn't try to gouge his customers. He got the basement constructed without a blueprint and knew better than I did what it needed for support pillars. They were under those parts of the lid where the risers sat. Each riser was therefore supported by the lid and it was supported by the wall and 2 pillars. The entire basement had 10" thick concrete with #4 rebar, excluding the floor. But because a person couldn't count on the basement being a faraday cage, the computer table I used as my radio shack was stored in a metal cabinet and pulled out when I was using the radios.

Jericho began airing in the fall of 2006 and I liked the show. The science was reasonably close considering how badly some of the TV shows abused basic physics. The bottom line is you have to set the nuclear weapon off at roughly 300 miles altitude and then you need to deal with the Earth's magnetic field which affects how the pulse hits the ground.

According to what I've read, Gamma radiation penetrated the deepest and that was about 4' of soil. You can get information on the subject or radiation reduction in two places, USS and KI4U. I find the information at KI4U easier to understand and harder to find but that's not to say the information at USS isn't accurate because it is. Sharon Packer is a Nuclear Physicist. The strongest natural structure is a sphere and a cylinder is an elongated sphere, sort of. My rectangular box was probably the weakest structure there was, I guess I should have built a dome. A dome is half a sphere and is as strong as the base.

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Tuesday, July 3, 2007
Fredonia, Arizona 86022...

Sharon and I cheated; we had a Post Office box. Although that really screwed up UPS deliveries, I routed those to John and Rachel's. When a shipment required an adult signature, Rachel usually signed. We made it up with an occasional Cure 81 or a turkey. They had what seemed to be an average family for the area, 5½ kids; well, 5 with one on the way.

Anyway, I decided it would be a good day to spend on a range getting everyone accustomed to the weapons they were using. We found an out of the way place with a good backstop and I was pretty sure it wasn't on the Res. It was a rather ideal place to shoot weapons equipped with those expensive flashhiders and even to shoot them a few times without. I brought one of the three extra cases of SA 7.62 NATO and a case of M855. It was the same with the handguns, 250 rounds of 230gr .45ACP Lawman and a little 9mm Lawman. I had Gold Dot, but would limit that, it was too difficult to get on short notice and more expensive than Speer Lawman.

"Dad, if you could have any gun you wanted besides the M82, what would it be?"

"I can't tell you that, but I can narrow it down. First off, check out the McMillan Tac-50. The package costs about the same as a bare Barrett. But, there are two I'd really like to have besides .50BMG, a M1A Super Match with a Swarovski PV 6-24x50 or similar scope Night vision and maybe a Harris bipod. The other gun I'd like to have would be a Marlin 1895 Cowboy model in .45-70 with a bandoleer for 45-70 cartridges `"

"Damon and I might be able to chip in and get the Marlin, but that other combination must run 15 grand."

"More, I'd only use Black Hills 175gr BTHP."

"For chits and giggles, what if I could get a Tac-50?"

"Don't bother unless you can get me a couple thousand rounds of Raufoss."

If a person got a .50BMG, a couple of very good scopes, he could easily lay out about 20 grand before he tried to buy the military only Raufoss rounds. That new AN/PVS-27 seems to be the hot ticket. FN is currently building the M16 rifles for the US military and the military only gets the price they do because of the quantity they buy on one order, like 40,000 or so. I guess it's cheaper to buy new rifles than repair the old ones.

Wednesday, July 4, 2007

For our 4th of July picnic, we had fried chicken, hamburgers, hot dogs, baby back ribs, potato salad, macaroni salad, pistachio salad, baked beans, flesh salad from our garden and one of those double recipe Devil's food cakes. We also had lemonade, Coke, Pepsi, beer and assorted sodas.

"That was good, anyone want a cigar?"

"Not if they're cheap cigars, no."

"They used to be cheap but not anymore. I have a few boxes of Marsh Wheeling cigars, the dark ones."

I got out a box and passed them around. I had a few takers and Damon put a half dozen in his shirt pocket. We chew them and smoked, everyone seemed to have is favorite way to smoke a cigar. Damon turned on a portable radio so we could follow the news from around the country. There were more disturbances than I expected but less than Derek thought there would be. I was getting to the place where I deferred to his military experience. My addition to the discussion was perspective, recalling similar situations and how they worked out, albeit based mainly on research.

“Five hundred thousand protesting in Washington.”

“Maybe they’ll get radiation sickness.”

“About that many in Chicago too.”

“Same story, but they must have brought in people for that protest.”

“Full out combat in Detroit.”

“Load canister, they’ll give up.”

“LA is quiet.”

“Oh, oh, LA is never quiet, especially on the 4th of July. People bring in those class C fireworks and usually the fire departments and police are fully deployed.”

“They’re having a parade in San Francisco.”

“Probably a Gay pride parade. They people like to brag about being non-normal.”

“Are you chewing that or smoking it?”

“Yep. I was told that my great grandfather went through 2 cigars a day and never lit one. An explosions?”

“They haven’t reported any.”

“Good.”

“Wait, there’s a firefight in Los Angeles, something about a factory or warehouse.”

“That sounds like the Battle of Jakes.”

“What’s that?”

“A survivalist story.”

“It don’t think so dad, they say the factory caught fire and all the people inside died.”

“Doesn’t mean anything. Maybe they escaped through a sewer or something. So far no serious problems anywhere?”

“Apparently not.”

“I don’t like it. Gimme another cigar, this requires some serious thinking.”

o

“Well?”

“I’m thinking, don’t rush me. Sharon, would you object to sleeping in the shelter tonight just to try it out?”

“What about the food?”

“Put it in the shelter refrigerators. It’s just a test run; we’ll use the VA-150 without the filter and button up the blast door.”

“Are you expecting trouble?”

“Nothing I can put my finger on. Remember last Thanksgiving? If you’re against it, we sleep in the house.”

“I’m not against it, but we should move some things from the refrigerator upstairs so we can have breakfast.”

As a rule, I don’t like foam mattresses, but it had been a long day and I was tired. I even invited John and Rachael to participate in our experiment, they begged off. Most nights I stayed up past midnight although tonight I was in bed by 11. I awoke the next morning to the sound of the TV blaring and the smell of fresh coffee. I splashed some water on my face, brushed my teeth, used the toilet and got dressed. John had told me we needed 2 bathrooms and I had quashed the idea. Gee, I hate being wrong, the shelter could easily handle up to 50 people with the air system we had and more if we added a second.

After a breakfast of bacon, eggs, hash browns and toast we opened the shelter and declared our experiment a success. By 10am I was on the phone talking to John about the second bathroom. He laughed and told me he had the pipes installed, he hadn’t wanted to chisel out the floor when I changed my mind. He said he’d send a couple of men by on the 6th to rough in the extra bathroom and it would be up and working by the end of the week. I think that also explained the apartment sized hot water heater in the generator room.

The kids announced they'd be leaving by the weekend, their vacations were almost over and each had a long drive ahead. I pigeonholed Damon and asked him if he'd ever considered moving to Arizona. I could use some help around the place and it would allow him to save his disability money. He begged off, not wanting to be that far from his kids.

"Listen up there are some things you all should know. The country is going to hell in a handcart. It was bad enough when we had terrorists flying airplanes into buildings. Now, they're here and those 7 bombs they exploded may have just been a warming up exercise. Our country has changed; it's filled with hate, distrust and more criminals than we have prisons for. You all know that you always have a place to come when the crap hits the fan, but don't wait too long, getting here could prove to be a real battle.

"We've equipped each of you with things we think you'll need to do that, don't let us down by not showing up. We've been buying food, generally enough for 6 people for a month every time we hit the grocery store. Yes, it's hard keeping extra food on the shelf, but find a way to do it, even if it nothing more than macaroni and cheese or bags of beans and rice. To help you get started, we have an envelope for each of you. That's to buy survival food, not groceries. You'd better plan on coming here without the ability to stop and get gas."

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By the time the kids had all packed up and left, John's men had the second bathroom working. He put signs on the doors for men and women.

"Your rifle rack is nearly empty, Gary."

"I had to supply the kids, they're either short on ammo, had a rifle I couldn't fit and advanced flashhider to or something. We ended up buying the younger kids Ruger 10/22s and 4 bricks of ammo. They'll get them when their parents think their ready."

"Man, I hate seeing an empty rifle rack."

"The boys asked me what I wanted for rifles beside the M82A1 and I told them a Marlin 1895 Cowboy in .45-70 or a Super Match M1A Equipped with day and night sights and a Harris bipod. I also pointed out that a complete Tac-50 rifle package was cheaper than a Barrett. They're bolt action so you can use a suppressor.

"Let me guess, a Swarovski day scope and a Raptor 6X night scope."

"Nightforce NXS 12-42x56mm with an AN/PVS-27 MUNS, and Hornady A-Max ammo. If it's the Springfield, a Nightforce NXS8-32x56mm with an AN/PVS-22 UNS"

"The Marlin will look nice in your rifle rack. It's a shame; you could have a Super Match for a little over \$1,600."

“We have that much left.”

“Want one?”

“Does a bear crap in the woods?”

“Ok, I make a phone call and get you the rifle. When you have the money for the rifle-scopes, let me know.”

“Sharon, I’m going to need \$1,600 plus sales tax to replace one rifle.”

“You just gave away several thousand dollars’ worth of guns.”

“This is different; it’s a super accurate sniper rifle.”

“What else are you going to want?”

“Ammo, 2 rifle scopes and a bipod.”

“What no fancy flashhider?”

“That too.”

“How much is all of this going to cost?”

“I’m not sure, maybe 65% of retail.”

“You’ll have to do it in installments.”

“I expected that, but I figured we’d have time, Rome wasn’t built in a day.”

“Amy called; they made it back to Palmdale with no trouble.”

“Did either of the boys call?”

The New Crusades – Chapter 16

“Check your emails. Amy said to tell you that she checked; Ron had a heart attack and died. Apparently Linda moved to Newport Beach.”

“Crap. It was just a matter of time, I guess. Two down and one to go, huh?”

“What are you talking about?”

“The Three Amigos.”

“You don’t really know about Clarence, do you?”

“I guess not. Oh well, considering the state the country is in, maybe it’s better they don’t have to go through it.”

“When will your rifle be in?”

“John didn’t say, not too long.”

“Tell me about the scopes.”

“I want either a Nightforce NXS8-32x56mm with an AN/PVS-22 UNS for a Super Match or a Nightforce NXS 12-42x56mm with an AN/PVS-27 night scope for a Tac-50. It will be hard to get, they’re expensive. The military has totally grabbed the market.”

Sharon went shopping and here’s what she found: The ATN 4-12x80DNS is a highly accurate daytime sniper scope. 80mm objective and 40mm tube combined with the best, German quality multi-coated glass on the market made the sight the best light-gathering device for shooting in the world. An array of features that will dazzle any marksmen include parallax-free construction; 4 to 12 variable Power Zoom, 1000-Yard Bullet drop Compensator with interchangeable cams for six calibers (50 BMG, .308, 30-06, .270, 7mm Mag, .300 Win Mag. 22 - 250, .243), 1000 Yard Range Finder and a super sharp, illuminated Reticle with 11 light settings. Additional features include 1/8 MOA adjustment at 100 yards, 100% weather resistance and Matte Black mil-spec finish with beryllium power coating. To covert the ATN 4-12x80 to a Night Vision Weapon sight is a simply twist the daytime riflescope eyepiece and replace it with a Night Vision eyepiece converting your scope into a high quality, very accurate night vision weapon sight.

This ingenious setup allows the shooter in the field to go from day to night in less than 30 seconds without tools, without changes in eye relief and remain zeroed all around the clock. Model 412X80DNS4.

I was, as the saying goes, standing in tall cotton. The rifle came with the Harris bipod installed which raised the price a bit but left one less thing to buy. I needed Black Hills ammo and the flashhider. It wasn’t too big of a problem, I had one spare M1A adapter

and only really needed the flashhider. That Black Hills ammo ran about \$450 a case of 200 rounds. I sent the boys an email telling them to forget the Super Match, I had it. Maybe I should point out that the M21 rifle is nothing more than a Super Match with an adjustable target stock.

I'd helped in the garden and Sharon was busy with her new pressure canner putting up veggies. I was sitting on the front deck enjoying a glass of lemonade when who should pull in but Damon.

o

"Change your mind? Come here to live?"

"Got some more lemonade?"

"It's in the refrigerator, help yourself."

"Got any more of those cigars?"

"I've got a lot of things, what brings you here?"

"Presents."

"Oh really, I don't suppose you have a Tac-50 do you?"

"Get real, Dad. I gave Derek the money to buy you the Marlin rifle. He bought that, the scabbard, bandoleers and 2 cases of ammo."

"Want to see my new rifle?"

"Don't you want to see the Marlin first?"

"Sure, I'll carry the rifle, you can get the other stuff, let's go to the basement."

"I need a wheelbarrow."

"It's in the garage."

I guess I sort of look like a Mexican Bandito with 2 bandoleers across my chest but I didn't have a sombrero. I put the loaded rifle in the rack the extra stuff in the cabinets and proceeded to get down the Super Match. I also dug around and found Damon a full box of the Marsh Wheeling's.

"Handle with care, Damon, it cost as much as you did, maybe more."

"Where's the day scope?"

“On the rifle.”

“Ok, where’s the night scope?”

“On the rifle, you just remove this part here and replace it with this and voila, you have either a day or night scope. I’d have rather had the Nightforce and UNS.”

“You have both the guns you wanted.”

“I have both the guns I said you boys could buy for me. I don’t really have the one I want above any other.”

“If I had the money, I’d buy you one.”

“I know you would, it’s the thought that counts. What were gas prices like?”

“I don’t know, I drove straight through from Gassville. You said to get something set up to be able to make the trip nonstop. My trunk is now a spare fuel tank. I have to get a luggage rack for the top of the car.”

“See any A-rabs on your way?”

“Not really. You’re still expecting trouble?”

“Has the FBI rounded up the ones who set off the 7 bombs? No. Do they have a clue who they’re looking for? They haven’t said. Are we out of Iraq yet? They sortied more ships to the Persian Gulf. The clock is ticking, kid.”

“How are you coming with the garden?”

“I planted too many green beans. I think we could run out of jars. I ordered another 40 cases of quarts from Canning Pantry. We won’t use them all this year, but they don’t spoil.”

“You’ve been spending a lot of money.”

“I concluded I can’t take it with me. I’m trying to dream up some kind of medical emergency that would us get enough money from the bank to buy the Tac-50 rifle. That’s hard; we have the defibrillator, a 10-liter oxygen machine, some medical supplies and a 15 month supply of pills.”

“I could try talking them into \$5,000, Dad. If they did that, they’d have to give Sharon and Derek \$5,000 grand each just to keep things even. You could buy a pretty nice rifle with \$15,000.”

“Here, have a second box of cigars, I like that idea.”

“What’s for supper?”

o

“We’ll eat out, it wouldn’t be fair to Sharon to expect her to cook after canning 5 loads.”

“Where are we going?”

“Probably up to Kanab. Maybe Escobar’s Mexican Restaurant.”

“How many jars do you do in a batch?”

“19 pints or 14 quarts. She was doing quarts of green beans so I guess she did about 70 quarts. Like I told you, I went overboard on planting green beans. If she did 6 loads, we’d have 7 dozen quarts.”

“I can only stay a couple of days, school starts soon and I want to be home when it does.”

“Thanks for the rifle and here’s hoping Matt’s in a good mood when you stop to see him.”

I had 2 Chili Rellenos as my combo, my favorite Mexican food. They were big, too, I had to tough through it just to eat both.

“That’s a big potato patch, how many do you figure to get?”

“Maybe a ton. We won’t eat them all, but I can give John a few bags and maybe sell some at a Farmer’s market.”

“I see you got the second bathroom finished.”

“John’s men had it almost done by the time you left. He was way ahead of me and already had the pipes in under the floor. When I was in the Air Force, most barracks had a bathroom with 6 stools, 6 urinals 6 sinks, and one large shower room. That was for what amounts to an Army Platoon. If we somehow end up down there in a real life or death situation, we’re going to have to schedule bathroom use.”

“Do you have any chemical toilets, just in case?”

“Two. We’d have to set up a couple of stalls in the room with the generator.”

“So when is this tragedy going to happen?”

“Whenever it happens and not one minute sooner. I don’t like the idea of the Persian Gulf having so many of our ships in it. I don’t like the fact that North Korea extracted enough plutonium from those fuel rods for several more bombs. And, I absolutely don’t like the idea that those 7 bombs could have been nothing more than a test run.”

“Sharon said Ron was dead. No more three amigos?”

“Oh yeah, just different faces, but it may be the 4 amigos, if John gets included. He practices what the LDS Church preaches and they have a lot of food and supplies put up. Enough for their family for a full year. He told me with the baby coming, he’d add enough infant stuff for the baby and another year supply to the adult foods.”

“Did he help you get the rifle?”

“Went through a cousin with a FFL. I have no idea how he accounts for the class 3 stuff, but for all I know, I’m a cop or deputy sheriff and don’t know it.”

“After you get the Tac-50, what do you want next?”

“How about a new, in the box, Thompson submachine gun with a bunch of 30 round stick magazines?”

“You can’t find those.”

“Almost. There’s no way I could every afford one, not with them going for \$20,000.”

“Why do you want all of these exotic weapons?”

“Only for a while. When I die, guess who gets them?”

The maximum effective range of a .50BMG rifle was ~2,000 yards or 1,830 meters. The range of the bullet was 7,450 yards or 6,800 meters. This was a rifle that you needed a very good backstop for, it was over 4 miles! The rifle was probably best employed with the Raufoss ammo, another military only item. From what Derek had said about the way the military accounted for its ammo, it was going to be difficult, if not impossible, to come by. You couldn’t even get the Barrett IMI ammo, everyone was out of stock. Two days later I went with Damon to the gas station and we filled his tanks, he dropped me off and was gone in a flash, just like Superman.

A week later, I got an email that said, “Order your rifle, two checks are on the way.”

“Sharon, did we get a check in the mail from the bank?”

“No, why?”

“Would you go online and check the account? Look for an unexpected deposit of \$5,000.”

“No \$5,000 deposit, but there is one for \$7,500. What’s that about?”

“Damon was going to go to Charles City and hit Matt up. We should get 2 more checks for \$7,500 each, one from Damon and one from Derek. The money is to allow me to buy a rifle, ammo and accessories, like ammo.”

“What rifle now?”

“A Tac-50, complete and ammo on top of it.”

“A .50 caliber? I thought they were illegal.”

“They are, in Kalifornia. They sure aren’t in Arizona.”

o

Sure enough, in a few days we got a check from Damon for \$7,500. The check from Derek was only for \$5,000 but he said to expect a UPS shipment, I’d like what he was sending. He said he bought me some .50BMG ammo. I talked to John and he said he’d get on the rifle post haste. I told him I wanted extra magazines, at least 5 and preferably 10 total. The ammo beat the rifle by several days, and I didn’t even look at it, I just hauled it to the basement.

Finally, the rifle came in and it had 2 scopes, a Nightforce NXS 12-42x56mm and the McCann Night Vision Rail holding an AN/PVS-27 plus a total of 10 of the 5 round magazines. The money was gone like Superman, in a flash, well most of it, remember John got 35% off. That sucker was heavy, too. It was about then that I thought back to my previous story and started to think about that tactical wheelchair.

“What on earth! This is Raufoss ammo. It’s from your son?”

“Sorry, John but look, I have 5 cases of Mk 211MP ammo. He must have had to bribe someone.”

“Who?”

“Derek. He’s as straight laced as they come. I’m going to stand on a stool and kiss him when I see him again.”

Barrett does not recommend putting a suppressor on their rifle. It voids the warranty and greatly reduces the life of the rifle. However, McMillan not only recommends it for their rifle, they sell them.

“Additionally, as technology evolves, it will simple and cost effective at a later date to upgrade the weapon. We can change anything on the weapon at any time the user wishes. We can also modify any existing suppressed Ruger pistol to this standard of excellence.”

I’ll have to tell you, I bought a used Ruger Mk II and sent it to AWS. This was the pistol I’d seen in a store in Scottsdale. If I had known they had the rifles with the suppressors installed, I could have bought one there. I did buy the parts kits for the Tac-50, just in case.

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“Are you done?”

“Done what?”

“Buying guns.”

“Until I see a new one I want, yeah, I’m done. What’s wrong, is there something you want to buy?”

“Hey, don’t blame me, I was happy not being a survivalist. We should increase our meds until we have a two year supply.”

“We might be able to do that, almost all of my meds are generics now. We won’t be able to get Avandaryl but I’ll substitute Actos and Glimepiride. I have a bottle of Ecotrin that will replace the Plavix. I think most of the funds will go to store a supply of your drugs.”

“How are we going to do it?”

“Buy them from Canada. If we use the right pharmacy and have prescriptions, we should be able to afford them. Get yours first and then we’ll get mine.”

“That doesn’t seem fair.”

“You’re going to outlive me anyway, Sharon. I’m good for 15 months the same as you. If you have a choice, get them in bottles that contain a 30-day supply. That will allow us to rotate them.”

She didn’t listen, sometimes I wonder if she ever does. She bought both of us a 6 month supply. It was another month before she could buy the other 6 month supply. By that time, I had the potatoes dug and bagged. I think we must have had about 700 jars of canned produce. The pickles went into pints, except for the whole dills, and everything else was in a meal sized container. I can easily eat a quart of green beans so she only canned those in quarts. Next spring I’d order more lids to replace the ones we’d use up

through the year. We sliced, blanched and froze the green peppers and blanched and froze peas.

I liked the Military Channel although much of the information was dated before it ever hit the air. I learned *kill chain*.

◦

5/25/2006 - WASHINGTON (AFPN) – At this moment, above Iraq and Afghanistan, American data sensors are collecting information and intelligence about what is happening on the ground.

What happens to the data depends largely on a sensor's owner and its mission. The data could be reviewed immediately, or it could be stored for later use. What is for sure is that terabytes of information, wherever they come from, often go unused – left on a secure hard drive until they are no longer relevant to anyone.

The Air Force is now engaged in an experiment to take that data and make use of it the moment it comes off sensors. During the Northern Edge exercise this June in Alaska, the Air Force will test a system that does just that: the Global Net Centric Surveillance and Targeting, or GNCST, system.

Data from sources such as unmanned aerial vehicles, the E-8C Joint Stars, the RC-135 V/W Rivet Joint, electro-optical sensors, synthetic aperture radar sensors, signals intelligence sensors and others are all likely candidates to be fed into GNCST.

Called "Gun Coast" by those involved with the project, the system can take near real-time information from a nearly unlimited set of data sensors and process it into useable information for the warfighter, said Maj. Gen. Gregory H. Power, Air Force director of operations and support integration.

"With GNCST, a lot of platforms and capabilities will be fusing their data into one single funnel and GNCST is at the bottom of the funnel," he said. "It takes all that information in, and through algorithms, is able to digest and disseminate very quickly and very accurately, the position of something like a (surface-to-air missile) site."

The system uses a Web-based interface on a secured computer network. An end user might access the system and ask it to locate surface-to-air missiles that appeared in a specific region within the last 45 minutes. The GNCST system would then respond, in as little as a few seconds, with target coordinates for those SAMs.

That type of responsiveness and accuracy would be of great use to pilots, General Power said.

"If we had a sortie that was going to attack a target, GNCST might identify a mobile SAM system that had moved into the area as the aircraft took off," General Power said.

“Of course, the pilot would not know about that,” he said. “But by having GNCST and being able to digest that data – getting it accurately and fast – that data would be available for the air operations center to pass to the pilot. This really is a kind of life-saving technology that, once fully developed, is really going to give us an edge on the battlefield.”

The Air Force processes much of its intelligence information by using manpower. But, humans who process intelligence information cannot work as fast or process as much data as the machines.

“A human being processing the data we are talking about here, it could take in some cases days, sometimes even weeks,” General Power said. “This machine-to-machine interface we will have with GNCST will allow us to do it in seconds, minutes at most. And the timeliness and accuracy of the information is the value we bring to the warfighter.”

The GNCST system was developed primarily to locate SAM sites, but it can be modified to find any number of potential threats, from Scud missiles to tanks. Complex computer algorithms allow the system to look at nearly any kind of raw sensor data and locate threats. And as the GNCST system develops, those algorithms will be adjusted to recognize any new threats.

“In the future, this target set will grow to eventually include all threats,” General Power said. “The database will be a living document, if you will. The list of threat systems will continuously be changing. As new systems are developed they, too, will be added to the database.”

The GNCST system could even find “non-threat systems,” General Power said.

One concern with allowing a computer to pick a target is the fear of removing the “human element” from the kill chain. In the Air Force command and control community, “kill chain” refers to the series of events leading from identification of a potential target to the ultimate destruction or “kill” of that target. The target could be a building, a cave, a convoy or a communications tower.

While the kill chain can be shortened through the use of computers, at the end, there is always a human who makes the final decision to employ force, General Power said. That will not be eliminated with implementation of GNCST.

“Just like in any execution decision, there will be rules of engagement on scenarios,” he said. “Once the concept of operations is developed, there will be certain checks and balances in it. The final element is the executing human being - the pilot on the sortie - at the end of the kill chain who will have the final say on if they drop on the target.”

Development of the GNCST system is spearheaded by the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency. Partners in the project include the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory in Laurel, Md., and the United States Strategic Command.

While the system is only in development now, General Power said he hopes the Air Force signs on for the system. Its performance at Northern Edge will figure into the Air Force's decision to become more involved in the technology.

"This technology has a lot of promise and we want to see it developed," General Power said. "We are pretty optimistic that it will succeed."

"GNCST will bring intelligence information with more accuracy in a much shorter time period than currently possible," he added. "It means we can find and accurately locate bad guys in a much shorter period of time, and hopefully prevent them from causing harm to friendly forces – in other words, saving friendly lives."

The New Crusades – Chapter 17

That was just what the military needed, a new set of boy toys. If they had too many, I'd always be willing to take a Ma Deuce or six off their hands. I almost had a heart attack when I heard last year that they were discontinuing the H-1 Alpha Hummer, not that I could ever afford one, they cost more than some homes. I looked into buying a used military M1114, but when they were put up for sale, they were junk. If I were 20 instead of my mid-60s, I'd buy one as a fixer-upper and plan to have it running by the time I turned 40.

I watched holidays, figuring that if another attack came, it would either be on a holiday or close to, like Black Friday. Was that only 10 months ago? It seems like it was a lifetime ago.

“Are you having stomach trouble again?”

“I don't think so why?”

“I just bought 4 bottles of Pepcid AC and can only find one unopened bottle.”

“I sometimes get up in the night with a little indigestion and take two, but I didn't realize I'd done it that often. Don't you take it too?”

“Not very often, are you anemic again? Do you think your ulcers could be bleeding?”

“Next time we see the doctor, remind me to have a CBC. I shouldn't have anything wrong; I'm taking Ecotrin instead of aspirin. The last time we checked it my CBC was a little low, but not out of range.”

“When was that?”

“I think that was June last year. When you ordered drugs, did you get Clopidogrel or Ecotrin?”

“Both. Do you need to double up on the Prevacid?”

“How many doctors samples do we have, 3 or 4 boxes?”

“Four.”

“I'll double up for 2 months and see if that solves the problem. Did you replace the Pepcid?”

“Six bottles.”

The following Sunday when I set up my pill caddies, I doubled the dose of Prevacid. If I hadn't had a large supply of samples, I wouldn't have bothered; it's one of those \$5 pills. It's hell to get old and even worse when you start taking pills. I sometimes wondered if doctors invested their money in drug company stocks.

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Thursday, October 11, 2007
Fredonia, Arizona...

...ANFO bomb in Cleveland. The blast destroyed a major portion of the airport terminal forcing the FAA to close the airport. Early reports indicated more than 200 dead and several hundred injuries. The bomb was delivered in a food service delivery truck, one of dozens supplying the terminal daily. Critically injured persons are being air evacuated to area hospitals and DHS declined to issue a statement referring to a continuing investigation.

"Sharon did you hear the news about the bombing at the Cleveland airport?"

"No, I didn't, terrorist attack?"

"I assume so. I'm going to watch TV for a while and see if they have more information."

Breaking news. Fox has just learned of a second explosion at Atlanta's Hartsfield-Jackson airport. Observers told reporters that a Frito Lay delivery truck detonated near the main terminal. At this time, WXIA is awaiting word from a news conference expected to begin momentarily. Our on scene reporter said there are blanket draped bodies 'everywhere'. Stay tuned for the news conference.

"They hit Atlanta, too."

"Anywhere else?"

"I haven't heard. You can't take a toothbrush on an airplane but bombers can drive up with a truckload of ANFO. Doesn't anyone try to discover these plots before they're carried out?"

"Ask Chertoff, not me."

I was before the baby boomer generation and as such, had been enchanted with TV. I sat glued to the set while the list of bombings continued. I had a pad and pencil and began to write down the locations and times the bombs had been set off. Before I was done, I had a list of airports and the bombs were all set off within a 15 minute period, generally in the area of a terminal. It took local authorities less than an hour to close most of the major airports and to begin searching every vehicle entering the airports. At

last count, they had found two additional delivery trucks containing up to 5 tons of ANFO triggered in most case by dynamite.

None of the airports bombed served any of the 7 cities they'd bombed on Black Friday. A total of 10 international airports had been bombed not including the two where the explosives had been intercepted. I took 2 Peppid AC and read the list to Sharon.

"Muslim extremists?"

"Sounds like it, the driver of the two trucks they stopped were from Saudi Arabia."

"And were nearing the beginning of the Holiday traveling season."

"If they don't blow the airplanes out of the sky, they now killing the passengers before they board. What next, nuclear power plants or poisoning the water supply?"

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"They won't do anything for a while Gary, they'll have to wait for this to die down. Do we need anything?"

"Nothing I can think of. Do you want to order another 6 month supply of drugs from Canada?"

"Let's do something on food and see how much money is left. What do you know about gold and silver?"

"A little, the US mints 1, $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{4}$ and $\frac{1}{10}$ ounce gold coins and 1 ounce silver coins. Any 22 carat coin is okay because they contain the stated amount of gold or silver. The last I looked gold was down to around \$500 an ounce. A person can also buy pre-65 dimes, quarters and halves, they contain 90% silver. Why?"

"I think we can get what food we need for under \$2,000. Even if we buy another 6 months' supply of prescription drugs, we'd have enough to buy some gold and/or silver coins."

"What do we need for food?"

"I thought we should top off the freezers, and fill in any holes on the shelves. How are you on Kool's?"

"I still have over 40 cartons, if you wanted, you could bring them up to a full case."

"Ammo?"

“Well... I could use some 750gr Hornady A-MAX. Say, just how much money do you have?”

“Enough, Why?”

“I’m going to check with Derek and see if there is any more of the 50 caliber available.”

“Just don’t go hog wild, whatever you spend on ammo won’t be available to buy gold and silver.”

“Derek, Dad, how are you? Really, good. Say that ammo you got, can you get any more? Sure, two cases would be enough, what do you need a thousand? I’ll have Sharon send you a check. What do you make of those airport bombings? They did, where? Yes I know where that is, on the south edge of plant 42, right next to Blackbird Park.”

“Sharon, Derek said he could get me 2 more cases and he’ll need a check for \$1,000. He also told me they bombed the Los Angeles control center at plant 42. He said it could be down for several weeks.”

“How many are there?”

“30 counting Canada:

Albuquerque Air Route Traffic Control Center (KZAB)
Atlanta Air Route Traffic Control Center (KZTL)
Boston Air Route Traffic Control Center (KZBW)
Chicago Air Route Traffic Control Center (KZAU)
Cleveland Air Route Traffic Control Center (KZOB)
Denver Air Route Traffic Control Center (KZDV)
Fort Worth Air Route Traffic Control Center (KZFW)
Houston Air Route Traffic Control Center (KZHU)
Indianapolis Air Route Traffic Control Center (KZID)
Jacksonville Air Route Traffic Control Center (KZJX)
Kansas City Air Route Traffic Control Center (KZKC)
Los Angeles Air Route Traffic Control Center (KZLA)
Memphis Air Route Traffic Control Center (KZME)
Miami Air Route Traffic Control Center (KZMA)
Minneapolis Air Route Traffic Control Center (KZMP)
New York Air Route Traffic Control Center (KZNY)
Oakland Air Route Traffic Control Center (KZOA)
Salt Lake City Air Route Traffic Control Center (KZLC)
Seattle Air Route Traffic Control Center (KZSE)
Washington Air Route Traffic Control Center (KZDC)
Anchorage Air Route Traffic Control Center (PAZA)
San Juan CERAP (TJZS/ZSU)
Guam CERAP (PGZU/ZUA)

Edmonton Area Control Centre (CZEG)
Gander Area Control Centre (CZQX)
Moncton Area Control Centre (CZQM)
Montreal Area Control Centre (CZUL)
Toronto Area Control Centre (CZYZ)
Vancouver Area Control Centre (CZVR)
Winnipeg Area Control Centre (CZWG)”

“What does it mean?”

“If they take out about 4 more centers, very little traffic will be flying.”

“Which ones?”

“Chicago, Cleveland, Indianapolis and Denver.”

“Ready to go to Sam’s Club?”

“Sure. Are you going to get cigarettes at the Res?”

“Tomorrow, after I order the meds.”

“If we have enough money after were done, I wouldn’t mind picking up some more QuikClot ACS.”

“Let’s see how it goes. I’m sure we can buy a few.”

“Can I make one more quick call?”

“Sure.”

“Derek, Dad. How’s chances on getting 21 CLS bags? How much? Ok, I’ll talk to Sharon and let you know.”

I wanted more gas masks too, but they weren’t a priority. We spent less at Sam’s Club than she thought we would and I got on the phone and ordered the ACS and compression bandages (Advanced Clotting Sponge). When we had the meat cut and wrapped and everything put away, I checked to see if we could get 21 of the CLS bags. We only had enough spare cash for 14. My next check was due in a few days so I called him and told him to go ahead and get 21 if he could.”

The 20-round magazines for the Super Match were the magazines sold by Springfield Armory. I didn’t see much difference between them and the Taiwanese magazines except for the finish. The T-57s were blued and I think they call the finish on the SA magazines phosphate. I loaded 8 of the magazines with 175gr BTHP and the other two with 165gr BTSP.

A week later the terrorists took out the other 4 control centers I told Sharon about, despite increased security. Derek called and said I had a UPS shipment coming with 2 cases of ammo and 2 large boxes of training supplies. My order from Z-Medica Corporation also came in and I could add 2 ACSs to each CLS bag. One of their products was a Battle Pack. The Battle Pack combines the needed items to control traumatic wounds. This pack improves upon the above hemorrhage pack by adding a rugged waterproof bag to hold a cinch tight sterile compression bandage or an emergency bandage and two primed high volume gauze pads. The bag is designed with a Velcro belt attachment and two attachments for ALICE clips. My only other purchases of medical supplies was Water Gel and Asherman chest seals. These supplies were all based on the assumption we'd end up in a firefight with someone.

"Are you going to try and come out for either Thanksgiving or Christmas?"

"We have to spend Christmas with Mary's folks."

"Thanksgiving would be fine with me; I'll pay for your gas and put you up."

"I'll discuss it with Mary and let you know, Dad."

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"Sharon, I invited Derek and Mary for Thanksgiving. Do you want to invite Amy and Lorie?"

"I was just coming to tell you I had."

"I'll call Damon and then we'll go shopping for the turkey and fixings."

"We already have everything we need."

"Are you sure?"

"I made a shopping list and then following your recent suggestion, quadrupled everything on the list."

"Wow, good idea. Four turkeys, huh?"

"No 4 turkeys and 4 standing rib roasts, I wasn't sure what you'd want. I also got a 20# bag of sweet potatoes, fixings for 8 pistachio salads, 8 cans of cranberry sauce, 8 bags of Pepperidge farms stuffing, and enough preformed crusts and filling for 12 pies."

"What no onion rings for the green bean casserole?"

"Six cans plus a case of mushroom soup. Do you want to hear the whole list?"

“Tell me you bought more Snickers Almond bars. Do we have enough coffee? You didn’t happen to get me some cigars, did you?”

“Yes, yes and yes. Eight of each.”

“Coke classic and C2?”

“12 12-packs each and 4 cartons of Marlboros. Stop! I got everything.”

She seemed angry that I’d question her so I went to the basement to listen to the radio (pout). That’s when I discover a second 25ft³ chest type freezer filled with the frozen vegetables and things like egg noodles, extra ice cream and other things we hadn’t grown in the garden. There was also a full sized refrigerator and a full sized stove. Someone had tried to get even for my fancy new rifle. I spent the remainder of day inventorying the supplies and updating the list on my computer.

“Still pouting?”

“I made myself useful and inventoried the supplies.”

“I got the refrigerator, stove and freezer used from a widow who was moving to Salt Lake City.”

“I see you added several new items to the food inventory.”

“I meant to tell you about that so you could put it in your spreadsheet; sorry, but I got busy.”

“I’d better call and top off the diesel and propane.”

“Already done. I also ordered a farm tank with 500 gallons of gas and bought you a gallon of PRI-G.”

“You’ve been busy, anything else I don’t know?”

“I have the Christmas shopping done; I don’t want to leave the house the day after Thanksgiving.”

◦

The things Derek bought came on Monday. I checked the expiration dates on the contents of the CLS bags and it was all new. UPS also bought a box I wasn’t expecting and when I opened it, Sharon had ordered several new DVDs of the movies that we wanted but didn’t have. I was afraid we’d need 2 new cabinets, one for ammo and the other for medical supplies.

“Oh, I meant to tell you, I got your Farmer Bros. commercial coffee maker repaired and bought new carafes.”

This was something new, I felt as if I created Mrs. Hyde. I looked again and our 2 rows of shelves had become 3 rows of shelves. If you own stock in Krusteaz, expect a dividend check, she had 4 cases of pancake mix and 1 case each of muffin mix, chocolate chip cookie mix and brownie mix. There was also a full shelf of Aunt Jemima syrup. The stack of toilet paper seemed bigger too. I checked, we had the same generator, but a 4th drum of gas for the backup.

If I said anything, it would just start a fight, so I began adding the extra items to the spreadsheet and recounted the toilet paper. Just because we had 2 bathrooms didn't mean we needed twice as much toilet paper, you tell her. I figured I'd better inventory the ammo too, who knows what she'd bought? Well, Wally World must have had bricks of .22 on sale and there were 4 cases, not 2 plus 4 cases of Black Hills 175gr 7.62 plus 2 25-count boxes of the T-57 magazines I didn't remember buying. I took 4 Tylenol extra strength and went upstairs for supper.

She announced that we were going to Kanab for supper, she wanted steak. I got my coat and dress up hat and got in the passenger side of the pickup. We went to the Rocking V Café. You have to love a place whose dinner menu contains the comment: Children of poorly behaving parents will be given a triple espresso, 6 scoops of ice cream and a puppy when they leave; and, ALL MENU PRICES are highly unstable and vary from moment to moment depending on wind speed, whim & the price of chocolate, as well as certain, little-known grain futures. The values listed below are for reference only. In the event that you actually make it to The Big K and find us, your menu may be encrypted for our amusement. \$27 for a filet is a bit steep.

“Where did all the money come from?”

“What money?”

“Let me give you a hint: Extra appliances, extra food, extra toilet paper, more Chinese magazines and more ammo.”

“I sold 4 quilts.”

“Yes, and?”

“\$1,250, each.”

The steak wasn't half bad, but I'd have preferred it with a little less age.

o

There was enough fabric in Sharon's quilting room to make about 50 quilts, but they take lots of time. If she could get 4 done a year, she'd have to work overtime. This wasn't a new source of wealth. However, on the way home, she told me about the rolls of coins she bought, \$2,000 of pre-65 dimes quarters and halves. I guessed the face value was about \$500. I'm sure you've met women like her before, they shop the clearance racks and never pay full price.

...exploded in mid-air shortly after takeoff at Chicago's O'Hare airport. The plane reportedly had over 300 passengers aboard. On scene reporters indicated that survivors were unlikely.

In the nation's Capital, the Vice-President briefly surfaced and assured reporters that the cleanup from Black Friday's bombings was well underway and that reconstruction was expected to begin in spring. Progress continues on replacing the air traffic control centers destroyed earlier this year. IBM announced it was awarded a contract to supply the computer equipment for the new centers and a follow-up contract to replace the equipment in the 25 other centers. The deal has an estimated value of \$10 billion.

"A billion here, a billion there, pretty soon you're talking about real money."

"Huh?"

"Everett Dirksen. I wonder if the \$10 billion is for the 5 centers that were destroyed or for all 30?"

"What's the difference, the Middle East war is costing us \$2 billion a day?"

"All indicators say the economy is healthy."

"You can thank the terrorists for that, Gary. It will probably take several hundred billion to rebuild the cities. You watch the Democrats will take the White House in '08."

"Assuming we have elections, yes."

"What do you mean by that?"

"Has Iran stopped uranium enrichment? No. Has North Korea tested a bomb and are they building several more? Yes. Have we found Osama bin Laden yet? No. Has he threatened to inflame the Jihad they're carrying on in the US and Europe? Yes. Has Israel or the US bombed the Iranian nuclear facilities? No. Has North Korea launched space junk and taken out several of our satellites? Yes. Has China fired lasers on our satellites passing over China? Yes, but only to blind them. How many of the ABMs have we deployed? We're only up to 24. If I could reach it, I'd bend over and kiss my behind goodbye."

"You're talking about World War III."

“Newt Gingrich has been talking about it since July 16, 2006. *Hear the words of Osama bin Laden*, Bush said: *This Third World War is raging in Iraq.*

“Crap.”

“That sums it up nicely, dear.”

At least 3 people of note had already said we were in WW III, Newt, Osama and Dubya. Seven, count them seven, nuclear weapons had been exploded on US soil and no retaliation taken because we didn't know who to blame. Al Qaeda doesn't have a headquarters we can find. While they may have been behind the attacks on the 7 US cities, no doubt the actual attacks were carried out by agents who had crossed the border(s) into the US or who were already in place, sleepers is the term. We didn't even know who had built the bombs; or, if we did, someone wasn't saying. Consider the possibilities, as Spock often said: US, Russia, China, France UK, Israel, North Korea, Pakistan, India, South Africa and maybe Iran or Saudi Arabia. It was called nuclear proliferation and it would seem that we were becoming helpless to stop it.

Was Einstein right? I do not know with what weapons World War III will be fought, but World War IV will be fought with sticks and stones. This topic brings me to that worst outcrop of the herd nature, the military system, which I abhor. That a man can take pleasure in marching in formation to the strains of a band is enough to make me despise him. He has only been given his big brain by mistake; a backbone was all he needed. This plague-spot of civilization ought to be abolished with all possible speed. Heroism by order, senseless violence, and all the pestilent nonsense that goes by the name of patriotism – how I hate them! War seems to me a mean, contemptible thing: I would rather be hacked in pieces than take part in such an abominable business.

The New Crusades – Chapter 18

Stick and stones, indeed! I think I'd better order more ammo. It is, after all, on my list of things you can never have too much of. I have a friend who is taking advantage of Wally World's offer to replace the 20# propane bottles for \$16 each. So far, he has nn bottles... He is, by any measure, a very wise man. One other thing, I think I just heard the clock say, 'Tock'. Can anyone explain why the Doomsday Clock is still set at 7 minutes to Midnight? Personally, I'd have the hands at 3 minutes, or less. Maybe they're afraid if they move the hands, it will start WW III... I'm rather sure old Albert never met Osama or Newt.

I don't write these stories for my amusement, you know. I got up to go to the bathroom at 7am. So did one of our dogs, on my bed. At least I know which one was guilty, this time. I've always claimed I write the stories for education and entertainment. Now you know the real reason, to keep me from killing my dogs.

November 28, 2007
Fredonia, Arizona...

All the kids have arrived, at last. Derek showed up with 2 more cases of Raufoss, and his hand out. At least his heart is in the right place and yes, Virginia, I bought more ammo. Six cases of 7.62 NATO, 8 more cases of 5.56 and five cases of Hornady A-MAX Match 750gr. The last one was just unpacking his or her suit case when... the TV began broadcasting:

This is an Emergency Action Notification requested by the White House. All broadcast stations will follow activation procedures in the EAS Operating Handbook for a national level emergency. The President of the United States or his representative will shortly deliver a message over the Emergency Alert System.

"Oh, chit."

"You can say that again."

"Oh, chit."

"IS THERE ANYONE WHO DOESN'T KNOW THE PROCEDURE BY NOW?"

"Amy, turn on the TV in the basement. Derek and Damon, help Sharon empty the refrigerator and then move the upright freezer to the basement. Everyone please move their suitcases to the basement if you haven't already. I've got to go make sure all the radios are disconnected."

Sharon apparently didn't have time to tell me about all those new FRS/GMRS radios or the new CB handheld radios, but they we also in the cabinet with the other radio equipment and the CD V-715, V-717 and new V-742s? This certainly wasn't her normal

spending habits. It was, however, beginning to become the time to consider closing the basement door. Yes, I had bought more KIO_3 from Medical Corps and so, apparently had Sharon along with Radiogardase. I figured it must belong on the list of things you can never have too much of, especially when John and Rachel and their children showed up and one of their boys was lugging the battery to their vehicle.

“Damon and Derek, if you’re not too busy, please pull the batteries from the vehicles. Oh, you already did, sorry.”

My Fellow Americans,

It is my painful duty to inform you that the Russian Republic and the People’s Republic of China have, what do you mean I have to leave on Marine One? Oh, all right. People, I assume you get the message, take shelter, and God Bless the United States of America. Yes, I’m Coming.

“Hey George, you had better hurry. Kids get pets down here go ahead and close the door.”

“What’s going to happen now?”

“I don’t know, but he said Russia and China. Either of them has the ability to launch a warhead to create an EMP. That will shut down the power and if it’s placed right do it for the entire country. However, we launch on warning so the minute NORAD picks up the incoming missiles, we’ll launch. I think they’ll launch the Minuteman III missiles first to keep them from being destroyed. If we need a second wave, we have 14 SSBNs.”

“Have we already given the order to launch?”

“Wherever Bush is, you’ll find Rumsfeld. They either gave the order before they left the White House or will do it from Air Force One. I’d bet it has already been given subject to NORAD seeing incoming.”

“Why would they do that?”

“They’re in Marine One until they get to Andrews. It might be too late if they wait, regardless of the capabilities of the helicopter. IIRC, NORAD doesn’t contact NCA until they have a positive hit.”

“NORAD is in Cheyenne Mountain, right?”

“Not anymore, they moved to Peterson AFB. Cheyenne Mountain is on warm standby.”

“I bet it’s hot now.”

“Can’t you just see some 3 star pounding on those 30 ton blast doors yelling, “Let me in, let me in?”

“Gary, that’s not funny!”

“It all depends on how you look at it. The American people didn’t start this war. We will, I’m sure, finish it.”

“Who started it?”

“Pope Urban II.”

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It was a cheap black and white TV. I don’t know if it lost the signal or got zapped by EMP. The good TV was sitting inside a Faraday cage just like everything else including the generators. I didn’t know if EMP could penetrate that far so I took the advice Sharon Packer presented and protected everything. When the power failed, the alarm went off and I could hear the generator kicking in. I silenced the alarm and closed the door. When the generator got up to speed, the emergency lights blinked out. What, you thought we were sitting there in the dark? Not when those emergency lights are as cheap as they are, \$20 at Harbor Freight Tools for the fancy one.

“There are 2 disassembled office cabinets in the generator room, why don’t you boys get them and set them up? We have extra medical supplies and more ammo. I put up a second rifle rack because I figured you’d bring your weapons.”

Sharon set out 2 loaves of bread, butter and lunch meat plus 2 large bags of potato chips. When nobody moved, I opened the Olive Loaf and made a sandwich. I added chips, got a C2 and sat down to eat. I had written about this so many times I almost got Déjà Vue, all over again. Damon had written some fiction once and he tried to make jokes about it. His current plan had been to build an earth sheltered home and he called when he had questions. I wanted to scream sometimes and tell to just read the stories, they lay the entire scenario out.

I had my handy dandy seven ten rule spread sheet I could use to tell when the radiation peaked and how long we’d be down here. (It was posted at Frugal’s and is on this CD as well as Jerry’s CD) Both the CD V-715 and CD V-717 have a maximum range of 500R. They are also less accurate at the edges of the range. A person can work around that or buy a 10,000R meter. The key to the pickup had the Nukalert and it never chirped once, telling me the radiation level in the shelter never rose to 100mR.

“I wonder where they hit.” John mused, not really asking.

“Somewhere, buried on my computer is a list of targets, state by state, I copied from a website. Just guessing, but probably the closest target was Nellis or Area 51.”

“We’re not that far from Las Vegas.”

“True, and just about straight east of Groom Lake. Either way, it won’t be long before we start to get fallout. I suppose it would be okay to connect all of the equipment, the danger of EMP should be passed. Hey, you two get off your behinds and get those cabinets assembled, we don’t want the kids playing with the ammo or CLS kits.”

“Why don’t you have beam antennas?”

“Because you have to point them with a rotor and I’m not climbing any pole to service a rotor in the middle of WW III. Nothing but static at the moment, we’ll have one of the teenagers monitor the outside radiation reading and log it.”

“Are you sure you’re not LDS, Gary? You seem to follow the guidelines on stocking up.”

“That’s because they’re good guidelines, John. This preparedness thing seems to come to members of your Church naturally. I suppose having to start over in what must have mostly been desert did that for you.”

“There’s more to it than that.”

“That sounds like an opening for you to start preaching, save that for later, please. I suppose we’re going to have to start over too. Putting in that garden this year was too much work for a couple our age. We have ample canned food and even basics like pails of grains. We’re about 160 miles from Las Vegas as the crow flies; we should get radiation in 10 to 15 hours.”

“You’re sure they hit Vegas?”

“Don’t know it for a fact, wouldn’t bet against it.”

“Vegas was already nuked.”

“Not Nellis or Area 51. All they got was the casinos. Nellis is on the north edge of town. Area 51 is at 37°16’05”N, 115°47’58”W and we’re at 36°56’58”N, 112°31’18”W, which is nearly straight east. I looked it up John, it’s 182 miles on a heading of 95.9°. At 12mph, the wind will carry the radiation here in 15 hours.”

“Why Groom Lake?”

Groom and Rogers are dry lakebeds on Air Force bases capable of landing and storing the airplanes.”

“You’re talking like we still have a military.”

“We do. I’d be willing to bet that the majority of our Navy put to sea. Aircraft may have been sent aloft to protect them during the attack and ground units sheltered in place. Like Damon said, Cheyenne Mountain is hot now. Since we’re now in a state of war, I think we’ll see internment camps like back in WW II for people identified as possible enemies.”

“You mean the Muslims.”

“It would be a good start. Unlike WW II, we don’t want to lock them up and forget them. It would give us a chance to sort them out.”

“Never happen, Dad,” Derek said. “We overreacted to the Japanese attack of Pearl Harbor. Japanese proved they were just as good Americans as anyone else, *Go for Broke*, remember? Besides, you saw the Bruce Willis movie, *The Siege*, didn’t you?”

“Let’s see, after the abduction by the US military of an Islamic religious leader, New York City becomes the target of escalating terrorist attacks. The head of the FBI’s Counter-Intelligence Task Force in New York, teams up with a CIA operative to hunt down the terrorist cells responsible for the attacks. As the bombings continue, the US government responds by declaring martial law, sending US troops, led by Gen. Devereaux (Willis), into the streets of New York City, right?”

“I rest my case. Rebuttal?”

“I said they wouldn’t keep them very long.”

Over the course of the first 2 weeks, we discussed many things including information I’d included in my stories, like the information on fallout:

3,000 Rem

Distance: 30 miles

Much more than a lethal dose of radiation. Death can occur within hours of exposure. About 10 years will need to pass before levels of radioactivity in this area drop low enough to be considered safe, by US peacetime standards.

900 Rem

Distance: 90 miles

A lethal dose of radiation. Death occurs from two to fourteen days.

300 Rem

Distance: 160 miles

Causes extensive internal damage, including harm to nerve cells and the cells that line the digestive tract, and results in a loss of white blood cells. Temporary hair loss is another result.

90 Rem

Distance: 250 miles

Causes a temporary decrease in white blood cells, although there are no immediate harmful effects. Two to three years will need to pass before radioactivity levels in this area drop low enough to be considered safe, by US peacetime standards.

Radius of destructive circle: 1.7 miles

12 pounds per square inch

At the center lies a crater 200 feet deep and 1000 feet in diameter. The rim of this crater is 1,000 feet wide and is composed of highly radioactive soil and debris. Nothing recognizable remains within about 3,200 feet (0.6 miles) from the center, except, perhaps, the remains of some buildings' foundations. At 1.7 miles, only some of the strongest buildings – those made of reinforced, poured concrete – are still standing. Ninety-eight percent of the population in this area is dead.

Radius: 2.7 miles

5 psi

Virtually everything is destroyed between the 12 and 5-psi rings. The walls of typical multi-story buildings, including apartment buildings, have been completely blown out. The bare, structural skeletons of more and more buildings rise above the debris as you approach the 5-psi ring. Single-family residences within this area have been completely blown away – only their foundations remain. Fifty percent of the population between the 12 and 5-psi rings are dead. Forty percent are injured.

Radius: 4.7 miles

2 psi

Any single-family residences that have not been completely destroyed are heavily damaged. The windows of office buildings have been blown away, as have some of their walls. The contents of these buildings' upper floors, including the people who were working there, are scattered on the street. A substantial amount of debris clutters the entire area. Five percent of the population between the 5 and 2-psi rings are dead. Forty-five percent are injured.

Radius: 7.4 miles

1 psi

Residences are moderately damaged. Commercial buildings have sustained minimal damage. Twenty-five percent of the population between the 2 and 1-psi rings are injured, mainly by flying glass and debris. Many others have been injured from thermal radiation – the heat generated by the blast. The remaining seventy-five percent are unhurt.

It was obvious that we wouldn't get more than 300R this far from Area 51 or Las Vegas. We'd be down to a safe level around 5 weeks, tops. My big printer was in the shelter

from the beginning, it was too heavy to move. I got a case of paper and printed out my stories for anyone who was interested to read. I got one complaint, they weren't realistic, ergo, they lacked the action generally found in other stories. Nobody got caught a long way from home or where their preparations were, if they had any, and I seemed too focused on firearms. I told them to watch a movie if they wanted action, John Wayne was good.

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09-19-2006

Doing Less With Less By Paul Connors

Anyone familiar with the American military and its operations in the fifteen years since the end of the first Gulf War has become accustomed to hearing or using the term, "doing more with less." That term, for me at least, seemed to be the quintessential catch-all that described all too accurately, the daily state of affairs for those who wear the uniform of the United States. Even before the attacks of 9/11, when American military personnel supported other, less lethal missions around the world, observers knew that at some point there would be systems failures, when personnel, equipment and financial resources (and the lack thereof) would all coincide to create a devastating train wreck.

SFTT and DefenseWatch founder, the late Colonel David H. Hackworth, US Army (Ret.) introduced me to the acronym, "CRS" in his book 'ABOUT FACE'. As readers of that excellent book and others in the service know, CRS means "can't remember shit." Those three little letters, that stand for three very important words, really do sum up the magnitude of problems facing America's armed forces. I am sure that as Hack looks down on us from above, that he is probably still frustrated and perhaps angry because nothing has really changed.

Over the course of his writing career, Hack always made a point of reminding people that George Santayana's dictum, "that *those who forget history are condemned to repeat it*" was something more than an interesting historical anecdote. Hack's distillation of that quote, into a three letter mouthful reminded me every day, that he had absolutely no intention of ever letting the folks he came into contact forget what really is a truism. What is especially disturbing as that too many people in government really do seem to be operating in that fugue-like state that brings on a massive case of "CRS."

The average American family without someone serving in the armed forces probably gives scant thought to the needs of the GIs fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan. The same could probably be said for their elected officials in Washington and most certainly there are senior uniformed leaders, the very same caste of military politicians that Hack labeled perfumed princes, who have forgotten that there are glaring gaps in what is really needed to protect the nation.

Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld came to Washington in 2001 with the single-minded intent of “transforming” DoD and the way this nation fights. Despite his best intentions, world events interrupted his plans and he was forced to deal with a very active and on-going war that came in two parts. One was the Global War on Terror (one inflicted on us from outside) and one was a war of our own choosing.

For the war of our own choosing, Mr. Rumsfeld and his senior deputies publicly rebuked the congressional testimony of Army Chief of Staff, General Eric Shinseki when he stated that the conquest of Iraq probably could be accomplished with less than 150,000 troops but the occupation would require a force of 250,000. Shortly thereafter, General Shinseki retired and has not been heard from since. Somewhere along the way, I concluded that General Shinseki was quite prescient; then again 37 years of military service provided him with an education and experience that NONE of the civilian leadership possessed or cared to acquire.

Less than two and one half years after US and coalition forces entered Iraq, while also fighting in Afghanistan, the US armed forces had to deal with another round in the BRAC process. While many of the base closures were no surprises to the affected services and the communities in which they were located, the reductions in capability did hit home.

Hard hit were the reserve components of all the services (with the possible exception of the Coast Guard since they are outside the DoD orbit). The Army National Guard, the primary provider of a combat ready force in reserve continues to see those capabilities drained away for conversion to combat support and service support roles, making that component more of a mirror of the Army Reserve than a force multiplier for the active component.

Army Guard and Army Reserve units, long used to making due with less than front-line equipment still deployed to operational locations with their assigned gear. Unfortunately, too many Adjutant Generals around the country are reporting that they were forced to leave behind organizational equipment for follow on units. Magnifying those problems is the fact that there is little if any funding available to replace destroyed or ‘left behind’ equipment. This wartime matériel, critically necessary for mission accomplishment is also often used for civil assistance missions like those created in the wake of Hurricane Katrina in 2005. To date, the active Army and DoD have made no plans for the retrieval and return of organizational equipment currently deployed to Iraq. What are the units that have re-deployed to CONUS to do? The question remains unanswered.

The Army Guard and reserve are not alone in this leaky lifeboat. The 2005 BRAC stripped flying missions and aircraft from 29% of the Air National Guard’s capability nationwide. While some of those capabilities have been partially restored or replaced by new or modified missions, the fact remains that the US Air Force will have a smaller and less capable Air National Guard to fall back on.

The outcome of the BRAC of 2005 has not been lost on the pool of potential recruits for the various branches. Over the last year, the Air National Guard has missed its recruiting goals for non-prior service members more than eight times. While retention of existing members is still high, shortfalls in accessions for personnel from civilian life could prove to be the portent of future shortfalls as young people conclude that their local Air Guard or Air Force Reserve unit has little to offer in the way of challenge and career opportunities.

The upward spiral of development and manufacturing costs for fighter aircraft means that the Air Force can afford to buy fewer and fewer aircraft. The increasing age of existing airframes and their higher than average need for maintenance has resulted in the Air Force deciding to retire aircraft in wholesale lots in order to maintain an ever decreasing inventory. The 'trickle down' effect that drives active Air Force planning turns into a snowball that ends up hitting Air Guard and reserve units especially hard. As repositories of some of the oldest airframes still flying, the active component shuts them down first to pay for the purchase of newer equipment while trying to stretch the maintenance dollars for essential equipment.

Analysis of the situation finds problems compounded by the wars against terror and Iraq. Operations in Iraq draw funding away from both new acquisitions and maintenance. The Air Force, the least competent service when it comes to force and personnel management, then starts to dump people to pay for toys. It is a vicious cycle.

Common sense dictates that the rubber band can only be stretched so far before it breaks. The same wisdom applies to people and equipment. The average Air Force fighter is now more than 20 years old. Almost EVERY B-52 still in the active inventory is flown by pilots who weren't even born when the last new one was delivered.

Unfortunately, common sense seems to be in short supply among planners in Washington. The failure to do the right thing is one of the symptoms of the CRS syndrome that Hack railed against for more than 30 years. It's a sad thing, but I have a feeling that Hack's admonitions will still be falling on deaf ears in the years to come. Fortunately, there are some commanders who know that they have an obligation to the nation and are crucial contributors to its defense. These are the officers who are pointing out that the system is breaking and that by necessity, they will be forced to do less with less.

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The endless and largely cynical blather about a "Global War on Terrorism," "Islamic extremism," "Islamofascism," etc. has served more to obscure than to reveal the strategic situation the West now faces. Islam is, and always has been, a religion of war. What has changed in recent times is that after about 300 years on the strategic defensive, following the failure of the second Turkish siege of Vienna in 1683, Islam has resumed the strategic offensive. It is expanding outward in every direction, and much of its expansion is violent, if not initially then once new Islamic bridgeheads are strong enough to sustain violence.

The most critical question, and it remains an open question, is whether what remains of Christendom will defend itself or simply roll over and die. Most Western elites, and almost all Western political leaders (including those who call themselves conservatives), accept and live according to the dictates of cultural Marxism, the Marxism of the Frankfurt School known commonly as “multiculturalism” or “Political Correctness.” Because cultural Marxism’s primary objective is the destruction of Western culture and the Christian religion, its adherents see Islam as a useful if somewhat troublesome ally. They will even go to war on behalf of Moslems against Christians, as the Clinton administration did twice in the Balkans. It is improbable, to say the least, that any Western political leader will rally Christendom to defend itself.

What the Emperor, and the Pope, said is precisely correct. If you read the Quran (and I have read it), you will find it is mostly a pastiche, some elements taken from Judaism, some from Christianity, some from the pagan polytheism common in Arabia before Mohammed (Allah was the name of the leading god of the pantheon, the equivalent of Zeus or Jupiter). The main ingredient Mohammed added to this stew was endless condemnations of “unbelievers,” including repeated calls for violence against them, e.g., “slay them in every kind of ambush.” It is not surprising that from its birth Islam has been at war with every other religion. The Quran mandates exactly that.

By telling the truth about Islam, the Pope appeared to offer Christendom the leader in its own defense that it must find if it is to survive Islam’s latest onslaught. More, quoting a Byzantine Emperor, he suggested that defending Christendom was his intention. The Byzantine Empire was the Christian world’s first line of defense against Islam for centuries. Its fall to the Turks in 1453 was a catastrophe, but by then the modern age was beginning in the West. Modernity soon gave Christendom a decisive advantage over Islam and all other cultures that endured until the 20th century, when the West fought three civil wars that largely destroyed it. (Another Pope bought the West the time it needed – by assembling the Christian galleys at Lepanto.)

The Holy Spirit is Truth. As men of the West, we can only pray that the Holy Spirit will strengthen the Pope to continue to speak the truth about Islam. If the trumpet sounds uncertain, who will follow? Hey, where do I sign up?

The New Crusades – Chapter 19

ST. AUGUSTINE, Fla. (AP) – A sheriff's deputy showing a handgun to friends at his birthday party accidentally shot himself in the face, killing himself, authorities said Saturday.

Matt Barnes, 26, told guests at the Friday night celebration his .45-caliber revolver was not loaded, according to the St. Johns County Sheriff's Office. He pulled the trigger around 10:30 p.m., authorities said, and was pronounced dead at the scene.

You know, more people get killed by “unloaded” guns than... I keep my guns loaded and teach safe gun handling. Generally, they're in Condition 3 unless it's a semi-auto pistol. Those are kept in Condition 1. My M1A is in Condition 4 because it has a butt-stock magazine pouch.

Condition 0 - A round is in the chamber, hammer is cocked, and the safety is off.

Condition 1 - Also known as ‘cocked and locked”, means a round is in the chamber, the hammer is cocked, and the manual thumb safety on the side of the frame is applied.

Condition 2 - A round is in the chamber and the hammer is down.

Condition 3 - The chamber is empty and hammer is down with a charged magazine in the gun.

Condition 4 - The chamber is empty, hammer is down and no magazine is in the gun.

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During the five weeks, we had many discussions. It would be winter when we came out, January of 2008. Would we be able to tell if Carl Sagan was right about nuclear winter? The answer, in this case, was a resounding yes, that snow was deep. When the boys opened the covering to the ramp, the snow fell in, nearly burying them. There was a drain at every landing where the ramp turned the corner and we hooked a water hose to that large hot water heater and flushed the heater, melting the snow. I was very concerned about the house, although if the heat tapes worked the way they were supposed to, we might not have any broken pipes. Sharon had left the furnace on heat and set at 55°.

The radiation level was ~94mR, with an occasional hot spot. We cleared a path to the back deck and then cleared the deck. The sky was cloudy as far as the eye could see. The thermostat was raised to a comfortable level, 74°, and we all gathered in the living room.

“I don't see how we can get home, look at the snow.”

“You can use my snow blower if you want, John. You should be able to get home by spring. Sorry, but I don't have a tractor or anything with a blade. I meant to buy a Polaris snowmobile, but spent the money on guns and ammo.”

“Do you have any skis or maybe snowshoes? If we could get to Fredonia, we could find something to clear the roads.”

“I’m sorry, I guess I didn’t plan far enough ahead. I’ve always been a big believer in the philosophy of strategic reallocation.”

“What’s that?”

“Looting, John. My Dad always believed in taking what you needed if you didn’t have it.”

“It’s not looting, kid, how many times do I have to explain the difference?”

“A rose by any other name...”

“Is a website, or used to be.”

“Still...”

“Think we’ll have a late spring?”

“Oh yeah and lots of mud.”

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Treatment of influenza – a disease caused by a viral infection – with antibiotics continues to be rampant among doctors and hospitals, yet new studies show that anti-viral medication can be life-saving.

In two studies presented Friday at a major infectious diseases meeting in San Francisco, doctors described how use of the antiviral medication oseltamivir – Roche’s Tamiflu – reduced mortality among patients by 71 percent and significantly reduced hospitalization and complications among young children.

In one study, patients sick with influenza during the influenza season were far more likely to be prescribed antibiotics than antiviral medication, said Allison McGeer, a consultant in infectious diseases at Mt. Sinai Hospital, Toronto.

And in some cases the failure to provide antiviral treatment may have been fatal. “In this cohort of adult patients hospitalized for influenza, oseltamivir therapy was associated with a 71 percent reduction in mortality,” she said at the Interscience Conference on Antimicrobial Agents and Chemotherapy, sponsored by the Washington, DC-based American Society for Microbiology.

McGeer and colleagues in the Toronto Invasive Bacterial Diseases Network, selected patients who were taken to hospitals for emergency treatment of symptoms due to influenza.

Many of the patients were first treated by their primary care physicians, and many of those patients were prescribed medication. Of the 185 children in the study under age 15, primary care physicians prescribed antibiotics – used for treating bacterial infections – about 24 percent of the time. When these children got to the hospital, they were prescribed antibiotics 75 percent of the time. None of the children were administered antivirals.

In the group ages 15 to 64, antibiotics were prescribed 23 percent of the time at the doctors' offices and were prescribed 84 percent of the time at the hospital, although 24 percent were prescribed Tamiflu as well.

For the older patients, 23 percent were offered antibiotics at the doctors' office, 91 percent were given antibiotics at the hospital, although 34 percent were also prescribed Tamiflu.

There were 25 deaths in the study, 22 among persons over age 65, most of the deaths occurring in the people who were not treated with Tamiflu.

McGeer admitted she was at a loss as to why doctors fail to get the message that influenza is a virus and antivirals work on viruses whereas antibiotics do not.

It's not just a Canadian problem, however. "It would have been worse than that in the US," J. Owen Hendley, professor of pediatrics at the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, told United Press International.

He said most pediatric offices do have rapid testing for influenza available but the doctors don't always use them. "The problem is that there are so many febrile illnesses (fevers) in children you simply can't tell what's influenza," he said.

But treating children with Tamiflu appears to prevent them from needing hospitalization and reduces the risk of pneumonia and other complications, said Dominick Iacuzio, medical director at Roche, who presented results of a study that reviewed treatment for more than 15,000 children.

Researchers scrutinized a database of health insurance claims from 2000-2005 influenza seasons to identify a total of 15,161 patients, ages 1-12 years who were diagnosed with influenza. Of those children, 7,914 were prescribed Tamiflu and their outcomes were compared with 7,914 children who had no claims for prescriptions of the antiviral medication.

The results:

- Children receiving Tamiflu achieved a 91 percent reduction in hospitalization due to respiratory illness.
- A 50 percent reduction in the overall risk of hospitalization.

- A 53 percent reduction in the risk of pneumonia.
- A 39 percent reduction in the risk of otitis media - ear infections.
- A 28 percent reduction in the risk of respiratory illness.

“This study suggests that early treatment with Tamiflu can have a significant impact on pneumonia, one of flu’s most serious complications,” Iacuzio said.

He said the studies also throw light onto the subject of influenza, which kills 22,000 to 36,000 people a year during a “normal” flu season. McGeer said that doctors still don’t seem to take influenza seriously.

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I’d imagine that very few people stocked up on Tamiflu, it cost ~\$50 a card and required a prescription. The idea of having a small fortune tied up in drugs, just in case, was probably foreign to most people. I’ll have to admit that Sharon and I didn’t have 20 cards of the stuff, we only had 10 cards. Those 10 cards were like 750 lawyers on the bottom of the ocean, a good start. We had done everything we could to have a stockpile of our drugs and it was enough for ~2 years in normal times. In the days after we emerged from the shelter, we were well aware that these were no longer normal times.

The clouds indicated a large volume of moisture in the air; not surprisingly, it snowed into April. The clouds also prevented the snow from melting and it just grew deeper, much the way Flight ER Doc described in *Paradise*. His story is a model of strategic re-allocation. Doc called it gleaning in his story because it had a nice Biblical ring to it. Doc accessed Navajo Armory and MCLC, Barstow to equip his people. If you haven’t read it, you should, it has hundreds, if not thousands, of very good ideas. I’m sure Clarence would have appreciated the scenario that caused the stuff to hit the rotating blade – you got it, a rock. Doc lays it out for you in Chapter 3, and explains how a 200’ rock hitting the Indian Ocean near what used to be called Bombay led to... It’s his story and I’ll not steal it, read it and find out!

We took Gunny Highway’s advice, improvised, adapted and overcame. Yes, it was just a movie, but it was good advice, even if it came from Clint Eastwood. It is also a good time to bring up another subject, suppressors. A suppressor offers 2 advantages and some disadvantages. The advantages are a significant reduction of the sound and, perhaps more importantly, elimination of the flash. A properly designed and fitted suppressor completely eliminates that flash, which is why I use the term flashhider to refer to suppressors.

One of the downsides is what Ronnie Barrett talks about, the wear and tear on the fire-arm. A second downside is erosion of the baffles and/or the accumulation of trash inside the silencer. The third downside is the fact that your government classified them as class 3 devices. I sure that the criminals with silencers only use legally registered suppressors and always pay the \$200 tax.

Most of my stories deal with getting ready for the disaster and don't really dwell on the aftermath. If a person is well and truly prepared, they should survive the initial disaster, regardless of what it is. The odds of a Russian or Chinese warhead smacking you on the head are fairly slim, depending of course on where you live. If the odds are bad, maybe you should move, we did. There may not be the perfect place, some are much better than others. Small town Arizona always had a special appeal to me and when my friend suggested Fredonia, I began to check it out.

Then, the money came in and we started our preparations for real. Every day put us closer to surviving and every day put us closer to something happening. After the terrorist attacks, I suppose your average person would have concluded, that's it, it's over. Most folks probably thought the old wives tale that bad things happen in 3's was nonsense. Others might argue that you had a self-fulfilling prophesy.

If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences.

The parable tells us that public definitions of a situation (prophecies or predictions) become an integral part of the situation and thus affect subsequent developments. This is peculiar to human affairs. It is not found in the world of nature, untouched by human hands. Predictions of the return of Halley's comet do not influence its orbit. But the rumored insolvency of Millingville's bank did affect the actual outcome. The prophecy of collapse led to its own fulfillment.

The Pygmalion effect (or Rosenthal effect) refers to situations in which students perform better than other students simply because they are expected to do so.

We were all suffering from a little shell shock, it was to be expected. The symptoms varied: headaches, backaches, inability to relax, shaking and tremors, sweating, nausea and vomiting, loss of appetite, abdominal distress, frequency of urination, urinary incontinence, palpitations, hyperventilation, dizziness, insomnia, nightmares, restless sleep, excessive sleep, excessive startle, hyper vigilance, heightened sense of threat, anxiety, irritability, depression, substance abuse, loss of adaptability, suicidal ideation and disruptive behavior.

One part of a George Carlin routine on euphemisms included how the word "shell shock" changed with every war to "battle fatigue", then to "operational exhaustion", then finally to "post-traumatic stress disorder". He concluded the routine by suggesting that the post-traumatic stress disorder might have been recognized more quickly were it still called shell shock, i.e., the more complex terms complicated the diagnosis.

In John's case, the shell shock was revealed by his anxiety to get to their home and check out Fredonia. We got everyone out with a shovel, at least until we ran out of shovels. With the snow as deep as it was, a snow blower didn't do much good. The wind was up just a bit and every morning the lengthening path through the snow had some snow blown back in. It took a while, about 40 days, but we finally made it into

town. Once there, John located a front end loader and used it to clear the snow to their home.

Once he got home and found everything to be in order, he settled down a bit. Fredonia was like a ghost town and we wondered if we were the only survivors. We weren't, of course, but faced with that much snow, many survivors hadn't done much more than shovel out their homes, if that. There were a number of seniors in Fredonia and they, like me, weren't up to digging snow with a shovel. Years before, in Davenport, Iowa, I used an electric snow blower when we got about 3' of snow. I think I broke about 6 shear pins before I got the driveway cleared and that was in 1978 when I was ~35.

I thought the snow was a good thing, if we couldn't move around, neither could any of those bad guys. You can call them by any name you want, criminals, bad guys or opportunists; in the end, they cared about no one except themselves. Stealing a TV didn't make much sense when the broadcasters were off the air unless you also stole the DVD/VHS player and the movies.

John began to open the ways into homes, all 450 of them although some were multiple family dwellings. I think he had a mental list of who might need help the most because he didn't just work his way down the streets, he went to specific homes first, seniors.

Later, when all the snow melted off and we could plant, we'd have a big garden and go looking for livestock, some may have survived. I made my mind up that previous experience notwithstanding, I was going to get a horse and name it Salina. Then, if the horse ran on me, I'd wait until it stopped and shoot it right between the eyes. I don't blame the horse, I blame myself, I was afraid and she sensed it. Maybe hanging a few scabbards on the horse would slow it down.

Sharon and I talked about that and she said I didn't have to shoot the horse, I just had to let it know who was in charge. It would help, she said, if the stirrups were properly adjusted so I could 'put my foot down'. Now she tells me. Fear is an emotion that we have to learn to deal with when working with young horses. The horse and rider will often communicate anxiety, or even outright fear, to each other. While fear is an important "attention getting" emotion, it can get in the way of learning.

The handler must realize that the horse uses fear to protect himself in his wild environment. One horse in the group senses danger and they all immediately become alert and ready to flee. In fact the flight in itself can be an exhilarating experience for the horse, reinforcing "spook and run" behavior.

Fear is something which a nervous rider can easily convey to a horse. Just about anyone who has been around horses for very long recognizes this. What many people don't realize is that horses can teach humans how to master fear. Prey animals can't spend their entire lives in terror, so they have to be able to manage this emotion. We can learn from them in this regard.

“Six feet deep and falling.”

“What’s that?”

“The snow, Dad.”

“If you wait, it will all melt. What do any of you have to go home to? Derek, if you want to leave when the roads are clear, I won’t stop you, but think about it before you decide.”

“We’re talking about that very thing; Mary is worried about her family.”

“You could always go and bring them back here.”

“I don’t know if they’d come.”

“It’s not there’s much industry in the area beyond the tourist trade and a couple of factories. I wrote about Flippin and Gassville in 2 different stories, I have a fair idea of what’s there.”

“We’ll see.”

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At the moment, thanks to Mother Nature, I had the upper hand, when the snow was gone, I’d lose it. It was their choice; I rarely intervened in the boy’s decisions, whether or not I agreed. Damon’s ex was probably frantic and all she knew was we were in northern Arizona. I thought it served her right and even if we wanted to, there was no way to communicate with her unless I could hook up with a Ham in the Garner-Britt-Clear Lake-Mason City area. Many of the Hams in that area communicate on 75 meters; although I was sure they also used 2 meters in the local area.

The sky began to slowly clear and the snow began to settle faster. The ratio of snow to water is 10:1, hence some of those snow banks represented ~ a foot of water, and it would indeed be muddy when the snow was gone. We located enough lumber, nails and hardware to construct a frame for a greenhouse we could cover with plastic and get our seedlings started. I should also note that if anyone was carrying, it was generally limited to a handgun and maybe a knife. The highway into and out of Fredonia was blocked and John didn’t want to open it to Kanab, just yet. Kanab ended up opening it for us and they brought in a badly needed load of food.

You can’t rototill mud, no matter how hard you try. Your best bet is to get a cup of coffee, light a cigar and sit on the deck and watch the field dry, keeping a gun handy, of course. That came after 4½ months of watching the snow accumulate and finally melt. I actually spent most of my time in the basement listening to and occasionally talking on the Ham bands. I reported our position as ‘north of Flagstaff’. I finally hooked up with a Ham from Clear Lake who said he’d try to deliver a message to Carrie to tell her that the

kids were ok. He said that they got 'lots of fallout' but were otherwise ok. I shared that we only got about 300R. I expect anyone listening thought we were in Page. I didn't say a word about our being on the North Rim.

"People will be out and moving around now boys, it's time to lock and load."

"Are we going pillaging?"

"I'm too old for this crap. What do you need, a new TV?"

"I was thinking about food and pharmaceuticals."

"That's strategic reallocation, not pillaging which is looting. We could use some livestock, the kids are awful tired of powdered milk."

"So you're saying we need a cow?"

"And a bull, that's part of God's grand design. We could use a sow, boar and a few pigs too. If you want fried chicken, well, you get the idea. Got to have smokes and coffee, that's for sure."

"There's plenty of coffee."

"For now, there is, but the pile has been shrinking. I don't much care for Yuban. I'll get you a list of the meds and you can see what you can do."

"You aren't going?"

"I won't slow you down?"

"I was thinking that someone had to guard the truck while we filled it with loot."

"There you go again with the wrong word. Call it gleaning, that's in the Bible. That's legal; it's cleaning up after the harvest."

Maybe my remarks were the result of being just a little punchy after being cooped up for so long. We wouldn't take anything we could grow in our garden and we weren't looking for uppers or downers at the drugs stores. Maybe our regular pills, some antibiotics and Tamiflu if they had it. After any disaster on this scale, there would be rampant disease attributed to the poor living conditions. I had the latest version of the PDR and the Mayo Clinic Family Healthbook, we could look up things that we didn't recognize.

Against my better judgment, we made our way to Flagstaff. I was opposed to going through Page, I was certain there'd be survivors there. Near Page is the Navajo Power Generation plant, a huge coal fired power plant that uses local coal. Didn't see any smoke or steam coming out of those 3 smokestacks. I made a note that we might have

a good source for coal, the plant burned 8 million tons a year and I guessed there was a big pile. Didn't see any people in Page either, maybe they were hiding. There were people in Fredonia and Kanab, so there had to be people in Page too.

Why would anyone nuke Flagstaff? It's just not that big! We started seeing signs a way out and I turned on the CD V-715. We were wearing our dosimeters, mostly out of habit. I was speculating that they were targeting the airport. I don't know what the CEP was on the weapon, but much of Flagstaff lay in ruins. The airport is south of town, towards Sedona. We hit the gun stores looking for ammo and then the grocery store looking for food. We should have brought a semi, not a pickup. Damon went out to the loading dock of one grocery store and there was a tractor trailer rig backed up to the dock.

A can of ether, a set of jumper cables, a splash of PRI-D and a couple of hours later, he had it running. While he was doing that, Derek and I cleaned out the pharmacy and loaded up on coffee, cigarettes and so forth. The high point of the day was when I scored 4 cases of Kellogg's Special K Vanilla Almond, another 40 cartons of Kool's and 48 cans of Folgers. The trailer wasn't full so we used pallet jacks and loaded it, man, my back was killing me. Late in the afternoon, maybe around 3, we headed north for home. Do 2 vehicles qualify as a convoy? I told you there were people in Page, when we got there, they had a roadblock set up. Damon revved his motor and blew through that pair of cars like they weren't even there. They'll have to tow them to move them.

We pulled into downtown Burbank, er, Fredonia and parked the truck. We took what we wanted and/or needed and left it sit. That was our good deed for the day. When we got home, Derek took Mary and Sharon back to town so they could sort through the truck and get anything they thought they needed. All things considered, we had a good day and the truck looked like it could be repaired.

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John had been busy rounding up livestock in the area. We could get milk and eggs from him and I asked if he'd seen any horses. He told me that they'd rounded up about 2 dozen and I could have my pick. I thanked him and told him I'd let Sharon do the picking. He told me they were in good shape, the standby generator he had kicked in when the lights went out and everything was fine at their home. Although I hadn't known they had a generator, I should have figured they did, him being a contractor. A person never knows about those things, it's always the cobbler's kids who need shoes and the minister's kid in jail.

The mud in the garden finally dried enough we could till it. There for a while I thought we'd be growing food in the makeshift greenhouse. When the sky was finally clear, it was really clear, the sun beat down unmercifully. We had to erect garden netting to keep the pants from burning. After we had it planted, the boys suggested we take the empty truck back to Flagstaff and refill it. They said that the canned goods in the stores were just going to spoil and we should get them and pass them out. I thought they were

being a little too altruistic, but as long as some of the folks in town wanted to go along and help, why not?

Off we went again, this time with folks from Fredonia in the lead. When we got to Page, they had a roadblock set up on the north side of town. We slowed to a stop and the folks in the front vehicle got out. Next thing you know, they're shaking hands, clapping each other on the back and having a high time. My boys and I got some steely looks.

The next thing you know, the folks from Fredonia invited the folks from Page to go with us on our shopping trip. They produced 2 semis and about a dozen pickups pulling trailers. Truth be told, we really did have a convoy, this time. On the way into Flagstaff, I mentioned Navajo Army Depot to Derek. I told him I didn't know what we'd find, but that was where the Arizona National Guard kept much of its stuff. He suggested it was worth a look and we could leave Damon in Flagstaff and take the pickup out there to see what was available. The Depot provides explosive storage services to other DoD customers ranging from small arms ammunition to large rocket motors. These customers have entrusted over \$7,000,000,000 worth of their munitions to the Depot.

We strategically reallocated a pickup and trailer load of material that day. All of the things were nib, and we had enough to outfit a sizable portion of Fredonia. With a semi, we could have outfitted the entire town. We even found tarps so no one could see what we had on the pickup or trailer. On the way back into town, we hit a gas station and picked up all of their cigarettes and sodas. Derek stuck the tanks and they were about $\frac{1}{2}$ full. If we could get a tanker and a pump, there was fuel available.

Because it seemed likely the kids were staying, we had to do something about housing. Derek and I checked out the mobile home dealers and found some very nice singlewides. We'd have to tow 4 back. This led me to realize that one generator couldn't power 5 homes. Southwest Windpower is also located in Flagstaff. So was Danneypat. The principle question was whether to get diesel or propane generators. If we got diesel, we could manufacture biodiesel to fuel them. So the answer was to get 5, not 4, diesel generators and use the propane for heating only.

The New Crusades – Chapter 20

We had found some fuel in the station west of Flagstaff and I was sure we could find more. If we could find PRI-D, we could restore and stabilize the fuel. All we need was one 55 gallon drum, for now. Our diesel tank only held 1,000-gallons, another consideration. I suppose if push came to shove, we could always dig up a tank or two and move them. After all, I had a friend in the construction business.

A person could spend the remainder of his/her life asking why this happened. In the end, he/she wouldn't know any more than they did in the beginning. One would have thought there would be a gradual buildup of tensions and the only question would be will it happen today or tomorrow? In a strange way, the terrorist bombings made sense; those were done by religious fanatics. How does one explain the 3 largest nuclear powers going at it? China was running advertisements on TV in preparation for the 2008 Olympic Games. I guess you can scratch the games.

Those first days on the road had been a real learning experience. When you started to add up the weight, 1 rifle, .30 caliber, M1A; 10 magazines, .30 caliber, 20-rounds ea.; 1 pistol .45 caliber; 5 magazines, .45 caliber, 8 rounds ea.; 2 canteens, quart; 1 knife, Rambo I; 1 pack; and, 200 rounds ammo, .30 caliber, your back began to hurt. I was traveling light according to Derek.

Our attitude was that we were like paratroopers in a way, all we had was what we brought with us. The upside was that we could leave the pack with the spare ammo in the pickup. The Mini-14 weighed less and so did the ammo; the problem with that was you couldn't carry enough ammo to be absolutely sure you could actually kill everyone. I suppose that's why our military was armed with the 9mm pistol and the 5.56x45mm carbine and the barrels were shrinking. The military frequently does whatever is illogical.

Our home was open to the road, affording zero protection. By the time we had the 4 trailers set and hooked up to everything, we began to wonder how to protect the home place. I remembered something from a story, crenellation pattern, and looked it up in dictionary. That was the staggered pattern on the top of castles, I didn't know that. The ideal would have been to have an estate with walls and we couldn't do that because there wasn't enough concrete available.

Could we build a wall out of sandbags? Derek suggested that we probably couldn't find enough sandbags to do any good. Damon then said why not get the front end loader and create a mound of dirt leaving a ditch on the road side. He asked Derek if we could use sandbags to create the crenellation pattern on top of that.

Derek, smiled and said, "Maybe, it's worth a try."

Another construction project? John had the front end loader and told me we could use as long as we provided the fuel and didn't break it. Our lot was square, 330' per side and the houses sat back about 100'. Damon and Derek took turns once I showed what I

though Damon had in mind. Meanwhile, I went shopping, we needed sandbags. I found a store in Kanab with 2 bolts of heavy muslin and figure it was as good as anything for sand bags. I took it back home and presented it to Sharon.

“Honey, I need a big favor, can you cut this stuff until strips and make us some sand bags.”

“What dimensions?”

“14” wide and 26” long but just cut 15” strips across the bolts, fold them in half and run one seam up each side with about a ½” seam allowance. Get the girls to help you cut them and when you get an armload bring them outside and I’ll start filling them.”

I wasn’t going to fill them myself, not with a bunch of kids there. They could fill them and I’d tie them off with a quick ‘cable tie’ using the roll of baling twine I had. The ‘knot’ actually has a name, the clove hitch. We used it when I was in the Air Force to tie wire bundles. It takes about 2 seconds after you learn the trick. With Audrey and Eric holding bags, Aaron and Britney shoveling and me tying and stacking, the ladies could hardly keep us with us.

In 2 days we had all of the bags filled with dirt, tied and stacked. 330’ per side was 1,320’ of 10’ high bank and the boys were making about 200’ a day working from dawn to dusk. We also had to figure out how to make a gate so I went to town and asked John.

“What kind of gate do you need?”

“To tell you the truth, I don’t really know. Something strong enough to stop any vehicle we’re likely to get trying to punch through it.”

“Still using the end loader?”

“Yes, but we’re about half done. Why don’t you ride back with me and take a look? Maybe once you see what we’re doing, you’ll come up with an idea.”

“Let me get my rifle.”

I had rifles if John would have needed one, but a man gets partial to his own weapon and it was better to let him take his. I know I wouldn’t trade my Super Match for most anything, not considering the optics, etc.

“You just left a gap?”

“Well yes, until we can figure out what to put in for a gate.”

"I've got some 6" schedule 80 pipe we can cut and weld. We can concrete in 4 posts, two for the gate and two to keep it from opening inward. Will that do?"

"Will it keep out a pickup or small truck?"

"Won't keep out a semi with a full head of steam but he couldn't make the turn."

"Galvanized?"

"Carbon pipe, you'll have to paint it."

"Where will the weak spot be?"

"In the center, I suppose we could add a 5th vertical pipe in the center that you could pull for normal times."

"And what, drop it in if we want the gate blocked?"

"I think you have the idea. Give me a couple of days, Gary, and we'll bring it out and install it. I don't want to put the posts in until I'm sure of the dimensions. "I think maybe 8' high with wire on the top."

"What about between the gate and the pile of dirt?"

"We'll put in forms and pour a little concrete and your boys can backfill and pack the dirt tight against the concrete walls."

"Say, do you need anything? We have a lot of canned vegetables."

"Yeah, so do I. What did you bring back from your trip to Flagstaff?"

"How about some M16A2s with M203s with ammo and grenades?"

"40mm grenades or hand grenades?"

"Yep."

"Can you spare 8 rifles and some of the ammo and grenades?"

"Sure. It's M855 ammo. Is that ok?"

"Steel core?"

"Same stuff as SS109."

"Will that be a fair trade?"

“Not really, I didn’t pay for the guns.”

“But you have them and that’s all that counts.

“Come with me and we’ll get you 8 boxes plus the various grenades.”

“Sorry, their only packed one to a box.”

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Long and short of it was we had our little fort, I think we should call it Fort Defiance, but it couldn’t be an official name. Fort Defiance was established as Arizona’s first military post for the US Army to patrol the entire Navajo Country. It was later used to subdue the Navajos on their homeland, and then, be slowly phased into a Navajo Agency to govern the Navajos, after their return from their 4 year ordeal at the concentration camp Ft. Sumner. Fort Defiance is located at the mouth of Canyon Bonito in Apache County, about 7 miles north of Window Rock, Arizona, or 25 miles northwest of Gallup, New Mexico. It is at an elevation of 6836 feet above sea level, with a 1980 population census of 3431 residents. It is located at Latitude: 35°44’40”, and Longitude: 109°4’33”. Fort Defiance contains a school system first started in 1870 and the Fort Defiance Medical Center first established in 1938. It was originally the location of the first Navajo Medical Center on the entire Navajo Reservation. There is a small reinforced concrete dam in Canyon Bonito that irrigates about 25 acres.

Upon the signing of the Navajo Treaty of 1868 at Fort Sumner, which allowed the Navajos to return to their own country, Fort Defiance was selected as the site of the Agency. The old buildings were repaired and Major Theodore Dodd, called by the Navajos, Na’azisí Yázhí (Little Gopher), became the civil agent. Upon his death shortly after, Captain Frank T. Bennett, whom the Navajos called Chaatsohí (Big Belly), succeeded him. In the fall of 1869, Bennett issued the sheep and goats stipulated in the Navajo Treaty of 1868 to the Navajo bands. Over 13,000 ewes and 300 rams, purchased from Vicente Romero, a large operator in the vicinity of Fort Union, New Mexico, as well as 900 female and 100 male goats, were distributed and formed the basis of the present Navajo herds.

Development of the fort into an agency was slow in getting under way. The first school, started in 1870 in one of the abandoned adobes, was short lived, and the first mission, established by John Menaul in 1871, also failed. Regular medical service did not begin until 1880, and not until 1883 did the Indian Boarding School become established.

Until 1899, Fort Defiance continued as the agency for all Navajos and Hopis, but in that year a separate Hopi agency was established at Keams Canyons, Arizona, and in the next ten years four other Navajo agencies were set up. In 1936, Commissioner Collier again centralized these, and chose Window Rock, Arizona, as the Navajo Central Agency for the entire Navajo Reservation. Window Rock, Arizona, would later become

the Capitol of the Navajo Nation. The Fort Defiance Agency contains many Navajo Chapters that help govern the Navajos in the Fort Defiance Agency area.

That mean it wasn't a good idea, heck, I'd used it before. We put up a sign, hand painted by Damon to announce our new name. I asked John why he wanted guns for his younger children and he said just to have them. I could understand that, that's why I got the Loaded Standard M1A, just to have it. I sent off and got those 1,260 rounds of SA ammo too and I had the 20-round magazines because it was a stupid law and mama wanted to leave Kalifornia more than I did.

I agreed with the suggestion about Fredonia because it was way off the main road. And the small plot we found was even further off the beaten path. We had a sit down family discussion to talk about what we were going to do next. Derek was worried about a job, Damon was worried about his social security and Amy wanted to go back to Palmdale. I pointed out that they must have slept though the war, they didn't have any jobs, Damon and I didn't have social security and it was doubtful we'd see our pensions. I went on to say that I didn't know if we'd get any more money from the bank in Charles City either.

Next, money. I went on to say that were it not for the fact that Sharon bought some gold and silver, we'd be flat broke. Any cash we had wasn't worth much and before very long it be as worthless as a Confederate dollar after the Civil War. If they wanted to go and rob Ft. Knox, be sure to say goodbye before they left, even Goldfinger couldn't do it. For those who don't know me, I'm a bit of a historian and love James Bond movies. Well. I like movies, period.

Next, food. We have enough land to grow food and a well for water if we don't get rain. John has a handle of the livestock situation and if we can stay safe, we'll make it. The things we don't have are things they didn't have 100 years ago and maybe you should consider it more the end of civilization as we knew it. For the most part we've lost manufactured goods and it will be like was when I was a kid. That also means that all these fancy pills won't be available unless we can salvage them from pharmacies, drug warehouses, hospitals or doctors' offices. That why we had such a big supply, to give us time to do some scouting and find the things we need to live.

Next, security. We'll get those sandbags arranged on top in that crenellation pattern, used on the top of castles. That will give us some security if we get into a firefight. Bottom line is we're short of people so we'll have to be able to call the cavalry, or sometimes be the cavalry. Derek and I located the Army Depot west of Flagstaff and that will give us supplies. We need to make another trip down there with a semi and see if we can get supplies for everyone in Fredonia who wants or needs them. I don't know how much training these folks have so we'll take John with us to help with our selection. In case you're wondering, I came up with the name from a fella named Jerry D. Young, a writer, good one too.

"Finally, can we all just get along? There are about 2,500 different denomination of Christians and Christianity is only one of many religions. Dr. J, who as you know, is a

Persian aka Iranian, said the Pope was right, or maybe the guy he was quoting. When the Shah got booted and Khomeini took over, he said, "The real Day of God is the day that Amir al mo'menin drew his sword and slaughtered all the khavarej and killed them from the first to the last." We have a bunch of the Muslims here with a mission and some who don't. On top of that, we have The Nation of Islam to deal with."

"This is the New Crusades, kids, like it or not. I'm not saying nuke 'em first and let God sort 'em out, but I am saying be very, very careful. The way I see it, we have some sorting out to do and that runs all the way from Islam to the Nation of Aztlán. Just remember, the First Amendment doesn't say freedom to worship Christian Religion, it says freedom to worship, period. They don't get in our face, we don't get in their face and that's the end of it."

"And if someone shoots at us?"

"Shoot back. Hell, don't wait for them to shoot first, if they point a gun at you use your best judgment, that entire politically correct BS gets people killed. We aren't the LAPD, warning shots are allowed."

"Dad, I want to bring up this business of full auto and 3 round burst fire."

"Derek, be my guest."

"There are times when massed fire is appropriate, like when you're surrounded and outnumbered and have a rather unlimited supply of ammo. With these chest packs Dad bought you'll be carrying about double a standard combat load. Nevertheless, aimed fire is preferred to spray and pray. I spent a full year in Iraq, mostly in a very troubled area providing escort service. The only time we ever fired our weapons was on the firing ranges. From our perspective, a successful mission was when you didn't fire your weapons. Keep that in mind while we go about securing our situation."

"Let me follow up on what Derek said. I bought those Tac Force Chest Rigs and they'll hold 12 30-round 5.56 magazines or 8 20-round M1A magazines. Plus you will have a magazine in your rifle and a spare in the buttstock pouch. I know it's heavy, tough. You will also have a full reload of ammo for your magazines. When you run out, you'd better have some rocks and a club. Same thing goes with the pistols. You will have 5 magazines plus a full reload. Odds are you won't have time to reload the magazines for the pistols, but you will have the ammo. We'll take MREs with us on missions in case we get held up and have to lie over. When we're out and about, the home place will remain on high alert. Any questions? No? Ok, meeting adjourned."

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We didn't have family meetings as a rule, but these were different times with different rules. I didn't want to go on many of the expeditions because someone needed to till the garden, track the inventory and make the lists. War is a young person's game and we

seniors should stay home and hoe the garden. I had read or heard somewhere that the average foot soldier carries about 60-80 pounds of equipment, sometimes more. I didn't always have to use the wheelchair, anyway. I suppose if we got attacked, I could make to the wall and up to the top, but I'd have to stop and catch my breath before I could return fire.

You know, I bought my first M1A after I saw the program on the Military Channel about the top 10 rifles. I sort of figured the AK would be #1, but was quite surprised at some of the other results:

1. AK 47
2. M16
3. Lee-Enfield SMLE
4. M1 Garand
5. FN FAL
6. Mauser K98 Carbine
7. Steyr AUG
8. 1903 Springfield
9. Strumgewehr 44
10. M14

Top 10 Fighting Vehicles:

1. M-113
2. M-2 Bradley
3. MCV-80 Warrior
4. Stryker
5. Sd. Kfz. 251
6. BMP-1
7. British Universal Bren Gun Carrier
8. M-3 Halftrack (Baby)
9. LVT Mk-4 (Amtrack)
10. HMMWV

Top 10 Ships:

1. Iowa class Battleship
2. Nimitz class Aircraft Carrier
3. Queen Elizabeth class Battleship
4. Ticonderoga Class Missile Cruiser
5. Fletcher class Destroyer
6. North Carolina class Battleship
7. Bismarck class Battleship
8. Essex class Aircraft Carrier
9. Deutschland Class Pocket Battleship
10. Hood class Battle Cruiser

Top 10 Bombers:

1. B-52
2. B-2
3. B-29
4. De Havilland Mosquito
5. Avro Lancaster
6. B-47
7. Tu-95 Bear
8. Junkers Ju-88
9. Handley Page 0/100
10. B-17

Top 10 Tanks:

1. T-34
2. M-1 Abrams
3. Tiger
4. WWI Tank (UK) (Indiana Jones and The Last Crusade Tank)
5. Centurion
6. Mk IV Panzer
7. Challenger
8. T-54/55
9. Merkava
10. M-4 Sherman

I suppose it might depend upon where a person was from whether or not he/she agreed with the Military Channel picks. In many ways, the BM-59 rifle built by Italy was predecessor to the M14 rifle and better because it could hand full auto fire. However, the M14 used solely as a spray and pray weapon wasn't bad because you didn't aim. The problem would be that you were dealing with one heck of a lot of recoil and the ammo was too heavy. The BM-59 was a modified Garand rifle, as was the M14. We could have licensed the system from Italy and had a superb MBR. I've said it before and I'll say it again, blame the Whiz Kids, and Bombs Away LeMay. The M16 made sense for the Air Force, but not the Army or Marines. The Air Force always went its own way; their previous rifle was the M1 Carbine.

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I haven't spent much time on communications equipment, so I'll address that. The US experienced trouble with the development of the JTRS (Jitters) and had to stay with the SINCGARS. The Combat Infantryman, if he had an individual radio, had a Spearhead, the handheld SINCGARS VHF radio made by ITT Systems. It got its name because it was the Spearhead of the new software driven emerging systems. One wouldn't have thought we would have found Spearheads at the Navajo Depot, but we did. SINCGARS were around and we got both so we could have a secure communications system.

Piece by piece the boys assembled the equipment from the depot, using the shelter as a bunker for the ammo. The Arizona Guard being an artillery unit gave Derek an idea to

build IEDs like the Iraqis used made out of M107 155mm howitzer shells. They were completely ideal, but require a separate fuse. Equipped for transit with a threaded lifting plug, they were easy to handle and it was easy to equip them with a C-4 charge and a det cord detonator. They collected det cord igniters and spools of the explosive cord. Derek said 3 shells was enough to blow up any vehicle and we had no shortage of shells.

They buried them all around the fort stringing hundreds or thousands of feet of det cord. We had the igniters in one central location on each wall and marked so anyone knew which charge on the map they detonated. Closer in, we had recovered Claymores also marked with a number and plotted on the map. Four people could delay any attacking force long enough for the cavalry to arrive. And we only need one lookout, me or a designate, usually Aaron.

We shared what we collected and by mid-summer no one was getting into Fredonia without paying a terrible price. We could use people my age and the younger people to protect the small town until we could get help from Kanab, if it came to that. Our setup was Sierra Hotel, although we couldn't ring the whole town, you've seen the size earlier. We could, however, create choke points and preposition matériel permitting a brief fight regardless of the size of the attacking force.

Meanwhile, when I wasn't taking my turn in the OP, I was in the garden murdering weeds. This was the second summer after the war and it wasn't as hot although we could have stood more rain. It seemed like everyone in town planted something and you could find almost anything you needed at our farmers market. One thing you didn't see being traded much was firearms, weapons or ammo. We had returned the taxpayers' tax dollars in the form of rifles, ammo, magazines, grenades, rockets (2 per family) and so forth.

"Are we ready for winter? Harvest is nearly done and it would be a likely time for an attack."

"Everyone was food, weapons, fuel and/or wood and we've managed to restore electricity to some degree to everyone in town."

"How do we stand on fuel, enough?"

"How much is enough? I'd have to say yes, we ran out of storage."

"Good. Security?"

"John has the folks in town organized and everyone here has spent enough time on the range to be effective with their weapons if we're attacked. We're planning on cutting a ledge on the backside of that pile of dirt to give everyone better footing. If we get snow and ice, it would be very hard to stand on a slippery slope."

“Has there been any word on attacks in other places?”

“Haven’t heard of any, but we’ve seen some small towns that were burned to the ground.”

“Did you see any bodies?”

“Yes, we buried them.”

“How come I’m just finding this out now?”

“You didn’t bring it up before.”

“Uh, duh, you’re saying it’s my fault that I don’t get out and help you?”

“No, why would you say that?”

“I expect you to bring back more than supplies; I expect you to bring back news. And, speaking of supplies, have you found any more Mason jars, we ran out.”

“That’s a two way street Dad, we didn’t look because you didn’t say anything about running low.”

“Maybe it’s my fault, I thought I put them on the list.”

“You didn’t because we crossed everything you wanted off as we found it. Start a new list and put Mason jars on the top. I’m not sure where we’ll find them, but maybe a grocery warehouse.”

“You know what we ought to do, boys? Send John up to Hyrum, Utah and get more from Canning Pantry. While he’s at it, he can stop by Draper and get us a new GF150 filter from Sharon Packer and swing by Payson and make sure Russ Williams is ok.”

“When?”

“How about now before it snows and closes the roads? I’ll call him on the radio and ask him if he can come by for a little talk.”

The New Crusades – Chapter 21

I called John and he came over. When I explained what I wanted, he declined. If we wanted to go, he'd ride along to provide support in case of trouble, but he wouldn't make the trip for us. Oh well, it was worth a try, I figured with him being a LDS he fit in much better than we would. You heard all those rumors about how well the Mormons prepare for a TSHTF scenario, haven't you? Regardless, I didn't want to be in northern Utah if there was snow on the ground after TSHTF. Never in all the years I traveled to Salt Lake City had I had any trouble; the people were polite, considerate and very friendly.

But then, I hadn't been there after some jerks had nuked their city, which probably took out the Temple. It wasn't the first time downtown Salt Lake had been hit with a disaster, and it might not be the last. We really needed Mason jars and I didn't like the idea of not having a replacement filter to the shelter's air system. My friend Russ was involved in BYU and a CERT in Payson. I knew he had a large supply of food and we had briefly discussed his plans for a survival shelter. I didn't know if he got it done in time, but when I said he could always shelter with Sharon Packer, he was quick to correct me.

We hadn't had snow yet, but you didn't need to be a climatologist to tell bad weather was coming. I dug out the gold and silver we had, we selected a reasonable amount of weapons and took off. We took 28 up to Nephi. From there we could get on I-15 for the trip to Hyrum. We brought our own food and fuel, assuming they might not have a whole lot to share.

Canning Pantry was only open on select days and the day we arrived wasn't one of them. We couldn't find a motel or hotel to hold up in and ended sleeping in the back of the semi-trailer.

"You folks aren't from around here, are you?"

I didn't know who he was, but the question was reasonable so I answered.

"Neighbor, we from down south in a little Arizona town named Fredonia, just south of Kanab."

"What brings you all the way up here?"

"We're on a shopping trip. We need jars and lids from Canning Pantry if they can spare any and I need to go to Draper to get some equipment for my shelter system. After, I wanted to go to Payson to look up a friend."

"Are you LDS?"

"John is, I'm a Methodist, Derek is a Baptist and my older boy isn't too big on church."

“Have you bought from them before?”

“Canning pantry? Yes, I think we’ve bought something on the order of either 120 cases or 160 cases of jars, plus lids and some of their canning supplies.”

“Big truck.”

“We didn’t expect to be able to fill it and we do have the means to pay for everything we need.”

“I’m the manager and I saw your truck. I can’t fill it, but I can sell you some things, you say you need jars and lids?”

“My last order was 20 cases of quarts and 20 cases of pints. Can’t remember how many lids we bought, but it was enough for a couple of seasons.”

“What do you need for spices?”

“Just your canning spices, especially for making pickles.”

“Back her up to the loading dock and let’s see what we have.”

“Damon, could you please?”

“He your boy?”

“Yes, so is the other one.”

“The jars will cost you \$15 a case. The lids, \$3 a box. The spices will be the package price plus 20%.”

“What’s the going rate on gold?”

“I can give you \$1,200 an ounce. Silver is worth \$22.50 an ounce.”

“Do you even have 40 cases of jars?”

“We do. I figured you can get it all if you have an ounce of gold.”

“Done deal.”

“Care to show me the gold?”

I held up a one ounce Eagle. He smiled and opened up the door to the loading dock. It didn’t take very long to load the truck and I noticed Hundreds of boxes of jars. I asked if there was limit and he said he had more quarts than pints. I asked if we could get an-

other 20 cases of quarts. I paid with the addition jars and lids with fractional ounce gold coins.

“Headed back south?”

“Yes sir, Draper.”

“Good luck on finding whoever you’re looking for. Here, take this recipe book with my thanks.”

We drove to Draper and I had a terrible time finding Utah Shelter Systems and tried to find either Sharon or Paul’s address in a phone book. We wasted most of the day tracking one of them down and I bought the GF150 filter. I was honestly surprised she even had one in stock. Nice lady and I knew that she knew Russ and I asked if she remembered Russ talking about the writer named Tom. She smiled and asked how things had worked out in my concrete shelter.

“Must have been ok, we’re here and we all spent 5 weeks in the shelter. Say, could you give me directions to Russ William’s house?”

“I could, but he’s not there, did you know what he was doing about a shelter?”

“He told me, did he manage to get it in writing?”

“At the last moment. I don’t think you will be able to find him. Could I give him a message?”

“Sure, tell him Tom from Palmdale lives in Fredonia with some of his relatives and if he comes our way, he can ask around, everyone knows where we live.”

“Do you need anything else?”

“Are there things in the CD scrubber I need to change?”

“I’ll get you some filters. Let’s see, I can let you have everything for a quarter ounce plus a tenth ounce.”

“Thank you.”

“No, thank you, I think you sold 2 shelters for us.”

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With Russ not available, we went home. I was talking with John on the way back about what it was like to buy a rifle in California when I got my M1A Loaded. Kalifornia had a 15 day waiting period for a rifle. The store tried to sell me on with the air gauged SS bar-

rel, not what I wanted. Using SA ammo with eyes as bad as mine, it made no sense. When they calculated the price, they were higher than Santa Fe Gun Galleria. I told them so and they matched the price. Wasn't near what I hoped, but I got it. It was a mistake to send the magazines to wherever and have them reshipped, the in between party wasn't really on the ball and I didn't get them for a month.

High Desert Storm had had SA ammo, at \$38 a battle pack ~ 27¢ a round. I could get it from Ohio for \$187 per 980 rounds, plus \$43 shipping or 25¢ a round. The good-bad news was they shipped it in that heavy can, a guy could get a hernia. I didn't need that; I already had one from the Whipple Procedure. Not good, but not worth getting fixed. Couldn't get it fixed now, if I wanted to.

Our situation was basic subsistence living, much as they had done a century earlier. We had some modern conveniences, but they could wear out and we probably couldn't replace them. We wouldn't be going to Hyrum again, either, that had been a hairy trip. While we didn't run into any specific trouble, it was eerie being the only vehicles on the road, amplified by the fact that we weren't from Utah.

I can say we got home just in the nick of time, we hadn't any more pulled in and began unloading than we were warned on the radio that there were cars at Fredonia's northern barrier. We piled in my pickup and headed to town, to offer whatever help we could. When we arrived, there were intense discussions going on so we stayed out of it. I sometimes open my mouth too quickly and say things I can't take back. Derek, in a low voice, advised us to just wait and see.

"What's going on John?"

"This a bunch here that claim all they want to do is pass through town on 89. There's some discussion about letting them do it because they'll get the layout of the town and get familiar with our defenses."

"Maybe you should let them. Derek, is the Tac-50 still in the pickup?"

"Yep."

"Get it and these people can tell them that for every .50 caliber rifle they see, there are 3 or 4 more they don't see. Do you think that might work, John?"

"I'd feel better if it were a pair of Ma Deuces."

"Damon, run home and get the two Ma Deuces. Bring them back and set them up on either side of Main Street."

"I'll get someone aside and tell them what we're doing," John winked.

It didn't take long to get set up and I sat behind one of the Ma Deuces. It was just for

show anyway and Derek took the Tac-50. Maybe they'd think twice before they took Alt 89 again. It did cut the miles off the trip down to Flagstaff, but still... We had collected more than 2 of the 50 caliber heavy machineguns from Navajo Depot, but the folks had been reluctant to set them up in town. I think this may have just changed their mind.

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Even though I had the Super Match with the fancy scope, I dearly loved my M1A Loaded model. It had an A.R.M.S. model 22TX30 lever mount holding a Burris XTS-135 with a 3 MOA red dot (I upgraded). If I needed iron sights, I flipped the lever and took off the red dot. Sometimes I needed to do that because the red dot was sighted in for 150 yards, close combat range. Close combat isn't the same as close quarters; close quarters are handgun and shotgun range, or that's how I choose to define them. When you're younger, like Damon and Derek, you'd probably add additional range to those figures.

I hadn't realized when I went looking for the Loaded all the extra features it had and I figured the prices had just gone up. I'll be honest I had never planned on spending what I actually spent. Kalifornia charged 25 bucks for the background check, 8.125% sales tax and made everyone wait 15 days. The rifle ended up costing \$1,756 in round numbers. It really ate up my budget; I made the extra magazines and ammo my next purchase. I prioritized, rifle, magazines, ammo. Next the handgun, magazines and ammo and finally the shotgun and ammo. The budget was busted but there was Christmas and a birthday coming.

My priorities started with the long range weapon, then the close range weapon followed by the in between range weapon. Finally, I bought the mount and the Burris red dot at \$300 and the mount which ran another \$100, installation was free. I took in my Nazi .32 auto and they were very impressed. They had a Browning Hi-Power, in the case with Nazi markings for only \$1,100, on consignment. My Sauer und Sohn was in much better shape with 98% of the original bluing.

◦

None of which had much to do with our present situation. We were entering another winter and had our first outside contact come through town. They wasn't any outward evidence that we were doing well, but for the fact that no one looked hungry, we had weapons on display and the town looked normal in nearly every way. Except, of course during the night when there were few lights showing and no street lights were lit. It wasn't everyone who had electricity, but those that did, shared – they ran extension cords to keep refrigerators and freezers running.

There were some of those military 50kw wheel mounted diesel generators allocated about one per block. Enough, barely. There was some diesel fuel in town and more was found on the roads by parties John sent out on salvaging runs. More often than not, the fuel was old and couldn't be used until it was restored using PRI-G or PRI-D. They

found some at a Marina at Lake Powell. We weren't that far away, you know, and I think they probably hit every Marina. Marinas sell fuel and it was probably stabilized in the winter. Regardless, when they pumped into the empty tanker, they blended in more PRI products. That might have been stupid if they bought the products, but they were salvage, hence free.

There are two stages involved in this preparedness thing: getting ready in advance; and, salvaging afterwards. A person might just as well salvage; the drug addicts are going to go for the pharmacies and they won't care how many usable things they ruin in the process. The first part got you the rifle and ammo you needed just in case something happened before you could go salvaging. It also got you the food you needed to have until you could salvage or grow a garden. You stored fuel because: 1) you needed to run the generator (maybe); and, 2) you needed it for your vehicle so you could go salvaging.

We had prepared and really did well salvaging. What we didn't get, John and his minions found. The bottom line really was, if it was processed, we were limited to the existing stocks and that went from food to fuel. Anything with sugar could be fermented and distilled to produce alcohol and anything that was oily could be squeezed to extract the oil. Add a little lye and alcohol and pretty soon, you had homemade diesel ala biodiesel. The real benefit to being able to produce biodiesel lay in the fact that it was far easier to get diesel engines to run after an EMP strike.

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"Red Alert at the south barricade!"

"Whatcha got?"

"Ragheads."

"We're on the way, kick butt and don't bother with names."

At this point in the story, one should back up and make a point. The entire purpose in locating in a little out of the way place like Fredonia was to avoid what was going down at the moment. If you didn't know of the place, you could hardly find it on a map. All of the other choices I'd made for locating in Arizona had either been a community on I-40 or one of some renown, like Sedona. It wasn't even a main highway, it was Alt 89. US 89 proper went across southern Utah and through Page, eventually ending up in Flagstaff.

I could only assume they were taking the shortcut to I-15 and from there going north to Salt Lake City. If they got past us, they most certainly wouldn't get very far in Utah. The decision had been made before we were notified, Fredonia was taking a stand and we were invited to the 'party'. A tank would have been nice, but the Arizona National Guard wasn't a tank outfit. We did have some arty, plus the canister rounds. They had been

used to good effect in Vietnam before the US became so PC you weren't allowed to kill the enemy.

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I recalled on the way to town an article I'd read about Jerry Brown, Governor Moonbeam:

Like Jimmy Carter almost single-handedly destroyed the American economy with 15% interest rates and 10% unemployment, Jerry "Governor Moonbeam" Brown destroyed California in so many ways the state has yet to recover. The guy was the 60s first contribution to the anti-American, socialist, anti-capitalist, anti-death penalty, liberal wingnut generation of politicians that have so polluted California, the country and most unfortunately the Democrat Party. Today his chaotic philosophy is represented by organizations like MoveOn.org that we wish would MoveOn.now.

Jerry Brown screwed up the state and then moved on to become the Mayor of Oakland to with the following promise:

"By the time we're finished, there will be a lot less crime in Oakland than there is in Walnut Creek" – Jerry Brown in his first inaugural address – January 5, 1999.

Now 7 years later the Contra Coast Times announces:

"The criminals are running amok in Oakland" – March 6, 2006

Just as Governor, his results as Mayor are just tragic. During his tenure homicides are up 57%, auto theft is up 84% and his 2006 scorecard reads "shootings are up 100% and a violent crime is committed on average, every two hours." – The Tribune and CBS.

Today Jerry Brown is running as the Democrat candidate for California Attorney General, the highest law enforcement official in the state. With his record of irresponsible management and philosophy he shouldn't be allowed to run a dog pound in Arcadia. However, the state is dominated by big huge monopolies; state employee unions, teachers unions, municipal unions, the left-wing media and entertainment cabal and a sick group of anti-American socialist commies like Jerry Brown which gives an edge to the insanity Democrats have visited on my state. If you think I have gone overboard, just read the tragic words of Governor Moonbeam himself:

"The US incarceration binge is not tied to the crime wave. It's a strategy to control the surplus population in a capitalist system that is breaking down."

"Here's the real scam. The drug war is one of the games to get more convictions and prisoners"

"Banning capital punishment takes us to a higher level of consciousness." "It is not okay

even to kill guilty people.”

“Prisons don’t rehabilitate, they don’t punish, they don’t protect, so what the hell do they do?”

There is a good chance the majority party in California most of whom are party loyalists will elect this moonbat from outer space to oversee our criminal justice system. Now doesn’t that just make you feel warm and cozy all over?

To illustrate that he hasn’t awoken from his lifelong drug-induced coma read two of his most recent dysfunctional promises:

“I will be an unusual attorney general.”

“We’re going to move left and right at the same time. “

We need to drop Jerry off at the clinic. If you want the state to avoid the chaos Brown will shower on us, work diligently with your friends to defeat him.

He’s the Governor who appointed Rose Bird.

My objection to him running for Attorney General came from one of his ads. A cop, probably LAPD, was holding up a .50BMG cartridge and saying it would go through 2 police cars. I certainly hope so... WTF, .50 caliber weapons were already illegal in California. Thing was, the Republican candidate for Attorney General wanted to reverse the law. Fat chance in a Democratic legislature!

Pravda East (New York Times) and Pravda West (LA Times) were usually on the other guys’ side and you can bet they backed Governor Moonbeam. Pravda South (Washington Post) and Pravda North (Boston Globe) probably did too. Then, in 2010, he’d get reelected as Governor, again.

◦

“Lock and load, Dad.”

“I did that last year, Derek. Son I’m ready to go, all I have to do is push forward on the safety. That pretty much happens naturally went I stick my fat finger in the trigger guard.”

We pulled into town at the south roadblock and quickly de-assed the vehicle. The enemy was armed with AK-47’s and they were spraying; I don’t know about the praying part. I take that back, I was praying, big time. What I wouldn’t give for an armored vest right now! Our pair of Ma Deuces added to the deafening sound that surrounded us. I’m sure glad I’d put in earplugs. What do soldiers do in combat?

This was my first actual combat and I wished I was 40 years younger. I got behind a pile of sandbags to have something to rest my rifle on and opened up. My rifle was very capable of one shot – one kill, but only if you hit them. I missed my first two shots and then settled down, did the breathing exercise and finally send one of them to Paradise. One thing I didn't do was count; I figured that if I didn't, my conscience wouldn't bother me as much.

Derek had warned me that killing someone, even an enemy, attacks your conscience when you realize that you've taken a human life for the first time. I didn't figure on walking up to the bodies and checking them out, I didn't want to puke. It was more like being a bomber pilot if I avoided that. Or, so I told myself. Seeing one of my bullets rip through a man's head and the blood flying out changed that, I had to throw up.

I won't claim that it got any easier, but we kept shooting until they were all down. Someone, I won't say who, went around and checked the opposition. Those that were only wounded were given the kind of instant first aid that eliminates the pain immediately. There was sand pouring from the front of the first layer of sandbags I was hiding behind, not good, someone had shot at me.

"I think maybe you got one or two of them, Gary."

"I don't want to talk about it, thank you. We did what we had to do. They were stupid to attack a barricade in the first place."

"Do you want one of those AKs?"

"You keep them, they're supposed to be the #1 combat rifle in the world. My M1A is in 10th place, but it suits me just fine."

"Give us your brass and we'll reload it for you."

"Help yourself, my stuff is Berdan primed, hard to reload."

"We may convert it to Boxer primed, we have more of the boxer primers."

"Like I said, help yourself. I'm using it up first and then we're going to use the Lake City ammo."

"Is that one of those Beta C magazines?"

"Yeah, they came out with the mag for the Mini-14 first and later for the M14/M1A. It's a universal magazine with different feed lips; at least they claim it's universal. Heavy when it's loaded, it weighs as much as a sack of potatoes."

"20 pounds?"

“Ten, but the rifle weights about nine and counting the sights you’re lugging around 20 pounds, about the same as a BAR. This is the first time I used it, but seems to work ok. Gives whole new meaning to load it on Sunday and shoot it all week.”

“Do you have just one?”

“Actually several, one for each rifle. We’re still shooting up the South African surplus. When we change to a different ammo, we’ll have to re-sight the rifles. The good thing about the magazine is that the weight seems to hold the rifle down some, at least at first, anyway.”

“How many can you carry?”

“This Tac-Force vest lets me carry two, one on each side. When you stop and think that 100 rounds of ammo goes at 5.2 pounds, and you have 280 rounds in the vest, you’re really loaded down. The magazine empty weighs 5 pounds. This is a young man’s game, John, I can hardly walk so loaded down.”

“But, altogether, you have 320 rounds because you have the stock magazine pouch and a 20-round magazine in the rifle.”

“Right, 15.6 pounds of ammo, 10 pounds of Beta C magazines and another 10 20-round magazines. That doesn’t count the spare rounds in the fanny pack because we usually leave it in the pickup. If you count it, you can add another 15.6 pounds not counting the pack; we carry one complete reload.”

“You could fight World War III.”

“John, we are, this is WW III. Oh, I see what you’re getting at; you thought the war was over when the warheads and bombs stopped falling. I can’t agree with that, the war isn’t over until the fighting stops. Did you get a body count?”

“Yeah, 63.”

“The sources tell me there are anywhere from 6 million to 10 million Muslims in the country. If you assume that they died in the same proportion as the rest of us, there are still a lot of them out there.”

The New Crusades – Chapter 22

My readers know how much I liked the movie *Heartbreak Ridge*. I often quote Tom Highway and advise everyone to *Improvise, Adapt, Overcome*. Just for the heck of it, I'm going to take time out and tell you the real story of *Heartbreak Ridge*. I don't see Tom Highway's name mentioned but maybe his movie character was based on a real hero. This chapter is a little longer, it's a complex story.

Heartbreak Ridge is a narrow, rocky, mountain mass running north and 3 south with HILLS 931, 894, and 851 dominating the MUNDUNG-NI and SATAE-RI Valleys. The south and east slopes were extremely steep. From these slopes the *Punchbowl* and HILL 1179 could be seen in the distance. Both prominent objectives had already fallen into our hands. Initially heavy vegetation covered the slopes of *Heartbreak Ridge* but air strikes and artillery destroyed all individual concealment. In each valley bordering the ridge were two important roads and stream beds. The roads were secondary class routes, but a road capable of moving military equipment was built in a short time. Also, a twisting, boulder-strewn stream bed in each valley furnished an approach for tanks. Narrow gorges and deep defiles presented difficult engineering problems which were overcome during the engagement. Enemy bunkers guarded the key ridges of approach. Due to a moderate slope to the west and north, the enemy supplies were moved up in positions with a minimum amount of labor.

The battle for *Heartbreak Ridge* started on 13 September with the 9th Infantry launching an attack on Hill 728, west of the main objective, and giving fire support to the First and Second Battalions of the 23rd who jumped off onto Hill 931, central peak of three heights on the ridge line. The 38th Infantry, meanwhile, had gone into reserve with its relief by the 23rd.

The first day's fighting for Hill 931 brought little success as the well-entrenched enemy called upon artillery and mortars to help repel the attackers. His stiff resistance was bolstered on the 14th as both the 9th and 23rd continued their assaults in the vicinity of Hill 894. B Company of the 72nd Tank Battalion was able to support the 9th from positions on the MSR to the west and their high-velocity tank fire proved effective in knocking out the enemy bunkers exposed to the direct fire of the tank guns.

The Second Battalion of the 9th moved out against 728 and by noon was on the south-east slope of Hill 894. However, an order came down directing it to change its original objective and swing northward to assault Hill 894 from the south while the 23rd Infantry continued attempts to overcome it from the north. The pincers attack was pressed all afternoon and by 1700 hours the Second Battalion of the 9th was within 650 meters of the crest but there it was stopped. The 23rd, meanwhile, had succeeded in gaining the crest of the ridge which joined Hills 931 and 851 and at 1900 hours it set up defenses for the night.

The enemy reacted quickly to the 23rd's gains which succeeded in blocking the ridge line connecting his garrisons on 851 and 931. Strong probing attacks were flung out as

the North Koreans attempted to reestablish their net-work of entrenchments but the 23rd succeeded in repulsing them all.

The 9th Infantry jumped off again to gain Hill 894 at 0700 hours on the 15th. Fighting fiercely against determined resistance, the Manchu regiment gained the crest by 1445 and immediately sent strong forces down the ridge line south and west from the peak and northeast toward Hill 931. The forces rushing south secured the entire ridge line, stopping on an unnumbered hill overlooking the village of Tutayon near the western MSR. A platoon from L Company of the 9th was unable to overcome strong resistance on Hill 485, western anchor of the ridge line running southwest of 894.

The troops from the Second Battalion, 9th Infantry who moved north from Hill 894 dug in on positions 400 meters north of their newly captured objective.

And while the 9th was successful in securing the southern and southwestern portion of the important ridge line, the 23rd sent its Second and Third Battalions in a coordinated attack to take Hills 931 and 851 while the French Battalion launched an attack on Hill 841, a peak east across the MSR from the regiment's foothold on *Heartbreak Ridge*. All these efforts met with no success in spite of close air and artillery support. The enemy utilized every weapon in his arsenal, fighting with furious determination in his effort to keep control of the vital ridge.

All limits on artillery ammunition expenditure were lifted by Eighth Army on 15 September as it offered every support to the 2nd Division in its attempts to take *Heartbreak Ridge*.

The 23rd Infantry renewed its slamming attacks against 931 and 851 on 16 September but made little gain during the day. Nightfall saw the tired, chopped ranks of the 23rd again going into perimeter defenses to protect themselves from the inevitable enemy probes. The air was thick with the blue smoke of artillery, the peaks churned into pulverized dust. The ridge had the appearance of a forest following a devastating fire as only twisted gaunt remains of trees and shrubs gave evidence of the once heavy underbrush which had carpeted the sheer slopes before the battle.

The enemy threw light probing attacks against the elements of the First Battalion, 23rd Infantry shortly after midnight. The North Korean garrison on 931 was strong although the positions of the First Battalion, 23rd, astride the ridge running south from 931 made resupply and reinforcement impossible. The men of the 23rd readied for a new assault which the probes had signaled. The anticipated thrust came at 0300 hours. Two enemy companies struck at C Company from the north. Hardly had the attack begun than an entire North Korean battalion was screaming down from 931 and C Company's positions were penetrated. At 0730 hours, A Company was pushed through the dogged C Company and together the two units hit the wall of attackers, forcing them back and regaining the lost positions. The enemy hurled another battalion-sized attack against the First Battalion at 1300 hours. Immediately a devastating rain of 2nd Division artillery was called in and the big guns thundered in the rear, their shells plowing gaping holes into

the ridge-line. A Company counter-attacked again, pushing north onto the ridge-line. At the same time, the Second and Third Battalions struck again toward Hill 851, clawing their way through a curtain of flying mortar to gain positions 1,000 meters from the crest. By this time, night had fallen and all three battalions dug-in to hold their gains.

The first faint streaks of dawn were hardly visible 18 September when the 23rd renewed its efforts on the ridge line. Two enemy regiments were now defending *Heartbreak* to the death. No amount of artillery fire could drive them from their bunkers on the rear slopes where they took refuge until the artillery lifted and the infantry assault began. It was a question of digging them out, one at a time. The 23rd attack was met with immediate resistance, fierce and determined. All day it raged with every foot forward paid for in human life. By nighttime, the First Battalion was within 500 meters of 931 when the enemy counterattacked again. Determined to hold, the 23rd called again on the superb artillery support and watched as the explosions shook the hill and turned the North Koreans back. The Second and Third Battalions, after dueling with the enemy all day, decided on a night attack against 851. Under cover of darkness they moved forward as the artillery rolled ahead of them. Assaulting the enemy in his foxholes, terrifying him with flame-throwers, the attackers crawled upward, not to be denied. Success was theirs at last. Shortly after midnight, the lead elements crawled to the top, exhausted but in weary high spirits for Hill 851 was theirs.

But the feeling of accomplishment was short lived. At 0100, an enemy company struck at L Company on the crest. By 0200, the enemy force had grown to battalion size and though the valiant troops clung to their hard-won positions for hours in face of violent attack, daylight found them being forced off their peak, pulling back under fire cover from the remainder of the Third Battalion. At 1230 hours, the Second Battalion, passing through the Third, counter attacked and attempted to retake Hill 851. Individual, hand-to-hand fights raged all over the crest as hand grenades exploded, throwing their dirt and steel like rain along the peak. And as the troops of the 23rd and the North Koreans grappled, a strong, reinforcing enemy descended and counterattacked in the early morning hours. L Company's ammunition became exhausted and the enemy surged forward, overrunning four machine guns. Still the company stood until the entire foothold was overrun. The company commander Lieutenant Pete Monfore stayed with the last of the defenders until he fell, mortally wounded among his men.

Meanwhile, in clearing weather that aided both air and artillery observation, both the First and Third Battalions of the 9th Infantry and the First Battalion of the 23rd slammed anew at their objectives. Thirty seven fighter bombers roared out of the sky and covered the Third Battalion of the 9th as it struck at the 485-728 hill mass north of Imokchong on the west MSR while the First Battalion of the 23rd again pushed up the unbelievably steep slopes of 931. Neither battalion was successful. Mine fields, covered by fire from both 485 and 728 stopped the Manchu Battalion. The First Battalion of the 23rd, clawing upward in an inspired attack, fought to within 300 meters of the crest of Hill 931 but again was stopped. Again they were forced to pull back, digging-in to await the dawn.

Westward, a patrol from the Third Battalion, 9th Infantry moved onto Hill 1024 to engage

and determine enemy defenses, returning before nightfall.

The Indianhead Division was in contact with four North Korean Divisions on 20 September when Major General Robert N. Young arrived to replace Brigadier General Thomas E. DeShazo due for rotation to the states – as commanding general. The former assistant division commander of the 82nd Airborne Infantry Division, General Young took over the helm of the 2nd Infantry in the midst of one its most rugged offensive actions. General DeShazo, with a long and spectacular record of action in Korea as a super-artilleryman and strong advocate of extensive use of forward observers bid farewell to the Division which he had served so well.

The fierce struggle for *Heartbreak Ridge* continued unabated throughout the day and again the two enemy regiments resisting the efforts of the 23rd Infantry were successful in repelling all attacks. The 9th infantry west of the vital ridge reported all its patrols in contact with the enemy. A Company on 867 was engaged all day before returning to its base.

Action on the entire Division front was quieter on 21 September than it had been in weeks with the enemy putting up only a passive resistance to patrols sent out from the regiments. All units gathered themselves for new assaults.

Battles flared again on 22 September as the First and Second Battalions of the 23rd launched another coordinated attack on 931, center of *Heartbreak Ridge*. Fiercest yet of all the assaults, both battalions were on the crest of the hotly contested height several times during the day only to be thrown off as the enemy attacked through his own mortar fire, hurling grenades and directing streams of machine gun fire forward of his advance. The First Battalion of the 9th became engaged in this same action and was unable to break contact although it was headed for an assault on Hill 728. Finally, plans to take the peak that day were abandoned and all three battalions took up blocking positions on the ridge lines extending from 931 in both directions.

The 15th North Korean Regiment crowded a strong counter-attack against the 23rd Infantry during the night supported by heavy mortar concentrations which churned the dirt on all sides of the defenders. Fighting fiercely, the 23rd repulsed the attackers and sent them scurrying back to the protection of their bunkers.

The 23rd and 24th of September developed into a tragic act which helped to give further backing to the label *Heartbreak Ridge*. Desperate to end the continual fighting, the First Battalion of the 23rd again forced its way up the slopes of Hill 931. There it grappled with the enemy, cut into his ranks and inflicted severe casualties, all the time moving upward. At 1400, A Company found itself within 50 meters of the crest. It called upon every reserve of energy and courage it had and flung itself upward but was battered back. Again and again it tried to make the grade, in spite of mortar, grenade, and bullet it crept and crawled forward only to be shoved down again. A fourth assault met with failure and summoning unbelievable guts the dauntless men moved out again and by sheer dint of courage scaled the peak. 931 had been taken. It was ours. And the First Battalion of the

23rd found it hard to believe but the presence of the men of A Company on the peak confirmed the fact which they hardly dared to believe. Hastily setting up a defense, the hand full of men remaining in the First Battalion dug in on the crest, surrounded by the aftermath of battle. The anticipated enemy counter-attack came at 0220 hours on the 24th. Maddened screaming, animal-like the North Koreans charged the positions in mass, hurling grenades out of the night and directing their murderous fire into the bunkers which they had built and knew so well. It was too much for the thinned, battle weary men to resist and at 0330 hours the remaining few were forced from the crest. At 0445, with A Company again in the lead, the First Battalion counter-attacked. At 0610 hours, B and C Companies were engaged with 200 enemy pouring down from 931 and from the northwest, repulsing the enemy efforts to annihilate them. The fighting continued throughout the day until at nightfall the heroic men of the 23rd went into positions for the hours of darkness during which they turned-back countless enemy probes.

The heart-rending story of frustration was repeated in the sector of the 9th Infantry during the same two-day period. An attack by the First Battalion to take Hill 1024 met with failure with the attackers going into perimeter defense 300 meters northeast of the crest. An attempt on 24 September by the First Battalion of the 9th to take Hill 728, again bypassing Hill 931, also was repulsed.

For eleven days, now, the two regiments had given every ounce of energy and reserve they possessed to take their objectives. Time and time again they had met with failure at the hands of the North Koreans. Each day was like the last-fight, suffer, meet or escape death, sweat out the nights only to move out each new day to climb and battle up the endless hills. Victory almost in hand for a second only to see it swept away again. But like all war, there was no rest. The objective had to be taken.

And so it was that the 9th and 23rd Infantry Regiments again moved into battle on the 25th of September. While in the valleys below the trees turned autumn golden and red and leaves littered the ground much as they did back home, on the hills there was only the pock-marked hard and dusty earth littered with steel and blood and the remains of men who had given all they possessed.

One success will often keep men going long after the time they could be expected to drop. And so when the First Battalion of the 9th Infantry met with success that day on Hill 1024, the news was a stimulant to all. Lead by A Company attacking from 800 meters below the peak, the lead elements of the Battalion were on the crest at 1145 hours. And moving up amid resistance from a heavy enemy mortar barrage, the rest of the Battalion was on the hill by 1500 hours and four hours later was tied in with ROK units on the left.

The French Battalion relieved the Second Battalion of the 23rd over on the ridge line south of Hill 851. The Second Battalion then moved down into an assembly area at Im-dong-ni, well south of Worrun-ni and well out of contact with the enemy. There its tired remnants were to gather themselves together, be resupplied, reorganized and readied for new commitment.

The Ivanhoe Security Force took over surveillance of the Kansas Line on 25 September and the 38th Infantry prepared to move forward for future action. Poor visibility hindered all actions.

The next day, 26 September, the French tried their luck against Hill 931 and found it no better than had the rest of the regiment. The First and Third Battalions remained in position, kept close into their meager holes by continuous barrages of enemy artillery, mortar, automatic weapons and small arms fire.

The 9th Infantry consolidated its positions on Hill 1024, sending a patrol from A Company 300 meters north to flush and kill 45 enemy troops in bunkers on the ridge line. The 38th Infantry sent patrols to the vicinity of Hills 1052 and 851 without contact.

The enemy made up for the relatively quiet day as darkness enveloped the rocky hills for the night. On Hill 1024, the First Battalion of the 9th Infantry contained strong enemy counter attacks while the Second Battalion repulsed equally strong attacks against its positions on Hill 582.

Morning of 27 September brought welcome relief to the First Battalion of the 23rd when it was pulled out of line, relieved by the refitted Second. Gladly the men came down from the hills into Worrun-ni where they, too, were given the opportunity to rest, bathe, get fresh clothing and resupply.

And the 38th Infantry became engaged on the 27th for the first time since its return from reserve. The First Battalion encountered enemy on the slopes of 1052 and a platoon from M Company became the center of attention for the entire Division when it inadvertently made a wrong turn.

Moving up to furnish fire support to the Second Battalion in its attack on 1052, the platoon was headed for Hill 868. The platoon had left its company area at 0500. Its instructions were to turn up a trail just beyond a certain tank which was blocking along the road. Unfortunately there was more than one tank in blocking position and it was at the wrong tank that the platoon made its turn. It walked into enemy infested territory until it reached a small footbridge 800 meters west of Satae-ri. At 0900, it became bitterly engaged with an enemy force deployed in bunkers on Hill 656, just north of Satae-ri. Word went back to Division and a rescue force was hastily assembled and sent forward. The units making up the force were mute evidence that everyone in the vicinity had been called upon for help. There was a platoon from X Company, French Battalion; two squads from C Company, 38th Infantry; a platoon from the Tank Company, 38th Infantry; and a platoon from the Tank Company, 23rd Infantry.

After several hours of hard fighting in the midst of the enemy infested area, the rescue force succeeded in extricating the embattled platoon and making its way back to friendly lines at 1300 hours. There was some question as to who was the most surprised at the maneuver, the North Koreans or the M Company platoon.

The enemy made a concerted effort to recapture Hill 1024 from the 9th Infantry on 28 September. Thirteen separate counter-attacks were pushed against the First Battalion but all were turned back with heavy losses. Immediately afterward, a narrowing of the Division front placed the peak in the zone of the 7th ROK Division and at 1300 hours, ROK elements relieved the First Battalion of its responsibility for holding the crest. The Battalion then withdrew to an assembly position 5,000 meters south of the lines.

Ground activity elsewhere in the Division sector on the 28th was relatively light compared to previous days but clearing weather permitted a record number of air sorties. Under control of Division FSCC, 128 fighter aircraft were employed in the Division sector with excellent results. The planes were particularly effective ranging beyond the limits of artillery fire, destroying enemy gun positions, supply and assembly points.

Activity on 29 September was confined mainly to the 9th Infantry as the First Battalion, supported by fire from B Company of the 72nd Tank Battalion and Division Artillery, moved out to make another attempt on Hill 867.

Lady luck favored the North Koreans on this day. Fog, ground mist and rain throughout the day greatly reduced the effectiveness of artillery support. No air support was available at all.

Initial contact was light as the lead elements closed to within 150 meters of the objective. But upon reaching this point, a hail of exceptionally intense mortar and artillery fire pinned the troops down. The concentration continued until 1725 hours when it suddenly lifted and the enemy launched a fierce counter attack. By 1800 hours, the 9th was ordered to break contact and return to its original positions.

The First Battalion, 23rd Infantry, relieved the Third Battalion on position during the day with the Third returning to Worrun-ni. The remainder of the regiment remained in place, organizing its positions as did the 38th.

All combat units of the Division were in contact with the enemy during the last day of September. In spite of every attempt by the Division to oust the entrenched North Koreans from their mountain strongholds, the fading September sun set on *Heartbreak Ridge*, Hill 1052, 867 and 728 and revealed them still in enemy hands. But the rock-like defenses for the North Koreans had been costly. Excluding air strike casualties, 7,256 enemy troops were killed during the month; 9,878 were wounded and more than 600 communists were herded into UN prison camps. With the air-inflicted casualties included, the enemy dead and wounded in September came to more than 20,000, a total the North Koreans could ill-afford to absorb.

Division casualties, though light by comparison, were the heaviest in months. In spite of the hopes for a truce, the war continued to rage at a heart-rending pace.

A plan for ending the seemingly endless struggles on the hills on and near *Heartbreak Ridge* was set forth at a staff briefing on 1 October by General Young.

Anxious to bring the operations in the mountains north of Yanggu to a successful conclusion, he directed the laying of plans for an all-out assault. Heretofore, the regiments had jumped-off on their own objectives one at a time. Consequently, the defending North Koreans were able to concentrate their fire support weapons, especially mortars, on the single attacking element of the 2nd Division. Added to the determined defensive attitude of the communists and the ideal defensive terrain, this had been enough to repulse almost every effort of the 2nd Division in the preceding weeks unless we were willing to pay more than a reasonable price in casualties.

The plan put forth by General Young envisioned all regiments attacking simultaneously on the Division front with a strong tank-infantry attack up the Mungdung-ni valley on the west coupled with an armored task force foray up the Saete-ri valley in the east. Purpose of these armored ventures was to break behind the enemy lines, disrupt his defenses and inflict the greatest number of casualties.

The advantages of the operation were three fold: First, the enemy would be forced to disperse his mortar fire over a wider front thus reducing the volume of fire he could place on any one particular area. Second, a line established on the salient terrain features designated as objectives for the attack would require fewer troops to secure than the jagged front now maintained. Third, a considerable saving of manpower would be realized by withdrawing and placing into reserve the units holding the hills which were dominated by the objectives of the proposed operation.

Citing the idea behind the three-regiment attack, the General emphasized the importance of the tank-infantry spearheads up the Mungdung-ni and Saete-ri valleys. Such an operation would not only put the forces into positions from which they could disrupt the enemy defenses from the rear and inflict heavy casualties but also would relieve a great deal of pressure on the Indianhead regiments making the assaults on the hills.

Target date for the attack was 5 October 1951; H-hour, 2100.

Plans to provide the immense logistical support required of such an operation were immediately drawn-up by G-4. Every available truck was pressed into service and by 1800 hours, 5 October, more than 45,000 rounds of artillery ammunition, 10,000 rations, and 20,000 gallons of gas were stockpiled in supply dumps in the valley of the west MSR.

As the trucks hauled load after load of supplies, the regiments moved into positions from which they could advance on the offensive when the word was given. Operation Order 37 setting up the attack plan was published on 2 October. The 9th Infantry was given the mission of attacking and securing Hills 867 and 1005, dominating the ridge line north of Hill 1024 to the west. The 23rd Infantry was to secure Hill 931 on *Heart-break* and the ridge line running west from that peak. It was also to be prepared to assist the 38th Infantry in taking Hill 728 and Objective C, an unnumbered ridge line which jutted south from Hill 851. The 38th Infantry, in the center of the Division sector, was to

assault Objective C and Hill 485, a small hill south of Tutayon on the west MSR. The 38th was also to provide infantry support to the 72nd Tank Battalion which was to be prepared to make an armored thrust into Mungdung-ni. The 2nd Engineer Battalion was to exert its maximum effort on the valley road below Mungdung-ni, attaching C and D Companies to the 38th Infantry, A to the 9th and B to the 23rd. One platoon of D Company of the Engineers was to support the tank thrust up the valley.

The tank-infantry task force to operate in the east valley of the Division sector was commanded by Major Kenneth R. Sturman of the 23rd Infantry. This force subsequently bore his name. Raiding thrusts were initiated into the enemy lines on 3 October and were conducted daily for the remainder of the period during which the Division operated in the area north of Yanggu. Composed of the 23rd Infantry Tank Company, 2nd Reconnaissance Company and the Combat Company of the Ivanhoe Security Force, the task force proved to be highly successful in knocking out enemy emplacements, inflicting casualties and diverting a portion of the enemy strength from the western half of the Division front. It complemented the stronger tank force operating in the Mungdung-ni valley to the east.

By 1800 hours of 4 October, all units of the Division were in position for the attack scheduled for 2100 hours the following day. One fortunate break occurred during the early hours of the 4th when a patrol from F Company of the 38th Infantry reported Hill 485 unoccupied. The remaining elements of F Company immediately moved onto the hill, securing it and thus placing one of their objectives in their pocket before the main assault had begun.

The tempo of 2nd Division air and artillery support picked-up during the daylight hours of 4 October as the enemy continued to throw in harassing mortar and artillery fire on friendly positions. Small enemy probing attacks were repulsed during the night.

The first indication of the reappearance of the Chinese Communist Forces into the X Corps zone came from prisoner of war reports on 5 September, the day the offensive of the Division was scheduled to get underway. One POW picked up by the Division reported a Chinese reconnaissance party on Hill 931. Later in the day, X Corps intelligence officers relayed a message from the 8th ROK Division that two civilians had been picked up in its sector who admitted being CCF agents. These reports were the first of CCF troops so far eastward since their disastrous May offensive.

At 2100 hours, 5 October, *Operation Touchdown* moved out with all regiments on line. In the 9th Infantry sector in the west, the First and Third Battalions moved toward Hill 867 as the Second Battalion remained in reserve. By nightfall, after a day without enemy contact, the two attacking battalions were secure on the high ground south and east of their objective and prepared to make their main assault the next day.

The Second Battalion of the 23rd Infantry moved from its positions on Hill 894 and under enemy mortar fire advanced toward the ridge line jutting west from Hill 931, the battered crest which had been wrestled momentarily from the enemy on the 23rd of September.

By 0300 hours on 6 October, the Second Battalion turned into the southernmost knob of the 931 Hill mass and immediately became engaged with elements of an enemy battalion which stubbornly resisted the attack. After a brief but sharp fire-fight, the enemy withdrew from the hill and the Second Battalion moved onto the peak. By 0630 hours, it had tied in with the French Battalion and the hill was secure as a result of the outstandingly successful night attack.

Over in the sector of the 38th Infantry, the First Battalion, less B Company which remained on Hill 778, moved out toward Hill 728 overlooking the west MSR. Only light opposition was encountered and the objective was taken with little trouble. A Company then extended north and east and tied in with elements of the 23rd Infantry on the ridge line west from Hill 894.

Down in the valley which lead out into the heart of the enemy defensive garrisons, the 2nd Engineers began the tremendous task of making a passable route for the tanks to advance north to Mundung-ni. Apparently the enemy had anticipated such a maneuver and had mined and cratered the road more heavily than any the Division had previously encountered. Tremendous boulders blocked the mountain stream paralleling the road, making the use of that normally passable avenue out of the question. Enemy mortar and automatic weapons fire poured into the area, seriously hampering but failing to stop the engineer effort. B and C Companies of the tank battalion stood by, firing in support of the attack on the hills overlooking the road and awaiting the opportunity to break through the obstacles which the engineers were clearing.

The 38th Infantry was given three new objectives on the 7th of October. They were Hills 905, 974 and 841, all in the central sector of the Division zone, and they comprised the next ridge line north of that under attack by the 9th Infantry. A fourth hill, 605, was also assigned to the 38th Infantry. It was on the left of the MSR about 1,800 meters southwest of Mundung-ni.

South of the newly assigned ridge line objectives of the 38th Infantry, the Third Battalion of the 9th moved onto Hill 867 against little opposition and made immediate plans to continue its advance the next day to the unnumbered hill between 867 and 1005. The Second Battalion, sweeping through the 8th ROK Division zone on the west, succeeded in cutting the ridge line between Hills 867 and 1005. It then set out to the northwest toward Hill 1005. Initial resistance was light but it increased with every move upward. The advance continued throughout the 7th and 8th and the morning of the 9th found the Second Battalion near its goal but held up by a death-stand resistance by the North Koreans. Fixing bayonets, the lead elements rushed forward and routed the enemy, digging the individual soldiers from their caves and by late afternoon the hill was secure.

The First Battalion of the 9th, during the actions of the Second and Third Battalions, had begun a move up the valley and on 8 October was occupying the high ground northeast of Hill 867 with a platoon on Hill 666. Plans were made to pass the First Battalion through the Second on Hill 1005 and then continue the attack to the northwest against the next peak, Hill 1040. Early on 10 October, the First Battalion made its move and

against moderate resistance inched up the slopes. The enemy, unable to mount his usual last-stand defensive actions after his defeat on 1005, was overcome by 1610 hours and the 9th Infantry was then in full possession of the 867-1005-1040 ridge line, sometimes spoken of as the Kim Il Sung ridge.

With the important Kim Il Sung ridge held by the 9th, the situation was ripe to launch the 38th in its assault on the next northerly line of crests dominated by Hills 606, 905 and 974. The way was also clear to move onto Hill 605.

Hill 636, the gateway to the ridge objectives of the 38th, was stubbornly defended by the enemy and the initial attempt by the Second Battalion to wrest it from the enemy failed. Another attempt was made immediately and although the crest was occupied by nightfall on 9 October, the enemy clung to his foothold and battled the troops into the hours of darkness before relinquishing his positions. The following morning, moving out from 636, the Second Battalion headed for Hill 905 and the high ground to the north east. Again the going was extremely rugged and the enemy resisted every foot of the way. A strong North Korean counterattack forced the battalion to hold-up its advance on the afternoon of the 10th but as soon as it died down the attackers moved out again. Finally, the Second Battalion battled its way to the top of 905 on the 11th and there pulled into a perimeter for the night.

Back in the valley, the Third Battalion of the 38th was moving north to launch an attack on Hill 605 which, if successful, would place it closer to Mundung-ni than any major friendly element had yet been.

Further south, the engineers toiled day and night, blasting through the blockaded roadway which prevented the tanks from thrusting into Mundung-ni itself. Enemy mortar continued to fall into the hive of activity in an effort to prevent a breakthrough.

The Third Battalion of the 38th continued to slog forward up the valley in face of enemy mortar and artillery fire. After two days of dogged advance supported by fire from the 38th Regimental Tank Company, the Third was able to move onto Hill 605 and secure it against counterattack. The Netherlands Detachment tied in on the left and L Company tied in with the 72nd Tank Battalion on the right. L was to remain attached to the tank battalion for the duration of the operation.

The situation in the western valley proceeded in heartening manner while in the east, the 23rd Infantry continued its bitter three week battle for Hill 851, the northernmost objective on *Heartbreak Ridge*. With Task Force Sturman making repeated slashes into the enemy lines near Satae-ri, the remainder of the 23rd fought the North Koreans who seemed destined to remain in their deep, protective bunkers forever. On 7 October, the First Battalion prepared to attack the hill once more from the south while the Second Battalion moved northwest from newly won Hill 931 to tie-in with the 38th Infantry which was securing the left flank of the 23rd. The Third Battalion, in conjunction with the moves of the other two units, began an attempt to cut the ridge line jutting west from 851. The attempt proved successful as the infantrymen managed to fight their way to a point on

the ridge line only 1,000 meters west of the crest. Determined to follow-up their advantage, both the First and Third Battalions inched their way nearer their long-sought objective on the 8th. The enemy fought back furiously, utilizing every weapon he possessed. But the attackers managed to make substantial progress in spite of the resistance and by nightfall they were in a position to dig-in to await morning and a renewal of the attack.

Task Force Sturman made its greatest effort to date on 9 October, ranging deep behind the enemy lines and pouring its high velocity fire into the bunkers on 851 and seriously hindering the enemy's efforts to make repairs.

The Second Battalion of the 23rd was diverted from its attentions to Hill 931 on 10 October when it was ordered to seize a new objective Hill 520, the end knob of a long ridge line running west from 931. The battalion moved swiftly down the crest of the spur, flinging aside the defenders, and by 1800 hours was secure on the objective, digging-in at the same time as the Third Battalion of the 38th secured Hill 605.

The Second Battalion of the 23rd tied-in on its left with the 72nd Tank Battalion in the valley below, completing a defensive line across the high ground separating the two valleys in the Division zone. Thus, the high ground on both sides of the Mundung-ni valley was secure from the positions of the 23rd and 38th Regiments southward. The stage was set for the armored thrust into the town itself.

The chief obstacles to the armored penetration had been the natural and man-made barriers in the defiles north of Imokchong. Since the start of *Operation Touchdown*, D Company of the 2nd Engineers had been blasting for mines, filling craters, grading the rocky road carved from the hillside, building by-passes and diverting streams in an effort to clear the way for the tanks. Thirty three tons of high explosives had been used in the operation. Finally, after laboring day and night, the defile was clear enough for tank passage. The commanding general ordered the waiting armor to be prepared to move out at first light on 10 October.

The long planned tank-spearhead rolled north through the newly constructed gateway into enemy territory at 0630, 10 October. B Company of the 72nd Tank Battalion led the raid with L Company, 38th Infantry aboard to give added weight to the punch. A platoon from D Company, 2nd Engineers, accompanied the group to give its assistance in clearing obstacles along the route.

The armored fist burst through the enemy positions and deep into the valley which served as his supply route. Mundung-ni was entered and bypassed as the lead elements of the tank force advanced 1,200 meters north of the town to place fire on the hills. One section turned west into the valley fronting Hill 841 and was able to strike at the reverse slopes of the enemy hills.

Eastward in the Satae-ri valley, Task Force Sturman made another surge north and wrought similar havoc on the disorganized enemy. The two tank assault groups forging

up the twin valleys found the enemy unprepared and hundreds of casualties were inflicted before the communist troops could find cover from the ranging fire.

Meanwhile, the commanding general ordered the 38th Infantry to hold up its advance once it reached Hill 905. Purpose of this was to avoid placing the 38th in a position exposed to possible enemy attack from three sides. Thus, the left flank of the Division was to be, for the moment, along a line connecting Hills 1040 on the south, 905 in the center of the flank, and 605 at the top side. From there the front extended east across the MSR along a line generally 1,000 meters south of Mundung-ni. Once the 8th ROK Division on the left flank of the 38th Infantry pulled onto line, then plans were to be made to be made to move out to take Hill 974 and 841.

Indications of an entrance of Chinese Communist Forces into the 2nd Division zone had been increasing during the preceding few days operations. Finally, on 10 October, a patrol from G Company, 38th Infantry, captured a prisoner who was identified as being from the 204th CCF Division. Interrogation officers drew from him information that the CCF was planning a counter attack against the 2nd Division within two days after the relief was complete.

The capture of the Chinese soldier formed the last piece necessary to complete the order of battle picture along the Division front. It was now evident that the 68th CCF Army had relieved the V North Korean Corps with the limiting point for the CCF and NK forces the northward projection of the Mundung-ni Road. Thus, the 2nd Division faced CCF troops on its left front and North Korean on its right.

The relief of NK troops by those of China was conclusive and decisive evidence of the staggering casualties suffered by the North Koreans in the operations along *Bloody* and *Heartbreak* ridges.

The night of 10-11 October was quiet except for a heavy clash by a Division patrol which ran into an enemy battalion in the vicinity of Hill 851. During the hours of darkness, the First Battalion of the 38th moved up from reserve into an assembly area in the vicinity of Kongdong.

The 23rd Infantry had spent all day of the 10th in another attempt to take Hill 851. This enemy stronghold continued to be defended with every weapon and man the North Koreans could muster and the determined assaults by the 23rd were again repulsed. Fighting flared anew on 11 October as the Second Battalion of the 38th struck out toward Hill 905 from its positions on Hill 636. The First Battalion, moving up from Kongdong, was following behind prepared to exploit whatever success the Second Battalion achieved. Forging upward against moderate resistance, the Second Battalion secured Hill 905 and the First Battalion passed through and took the high ground between the newly won objective and Hill 974 to the north.

That night, B of the 38th secured the high ground between the two hills and A and C pulled back onto 905.

Plans for extending the holdings of the 38th Infantry were inaugurated on 12 October with a boundary shift to the west which placed Hill 1220 in the Division sector. The Division commander directed the 38th to prepare to take Hill 1220 after the 9th Infantry moved up to secure the terrain adjacent to the west MSR, freeing the 38th for the operation. The 23rd Infantry was directed to make a new assault to wrest Hill 851 from the North Koreans. The 72nd Tank Battalion reverted from the 38th to the 9th Infantry and was to continue its daily thrusts into Mundung-ni.

At 1300 hours on the 12th, the First Battalion of the 38th moved out against light enemy resistance and in two hours had secured Hill 974, thus placing it in a position for its later attack on 1220. The 9th Infantry organized on its newly occupied positions and the 23rd made preparations for hitting 851 the following day.

Both Task Force Sturman and the 72nd Tank Battalion made new forays into the enemy lines on the 12th and again inflicted heavy casualties and wrought extensive damage to the enemy rear areas. One platoon moved up the deep westward draw to a point almost directly north of Hill 841 and slammed its effective, high velocity fire into the Chinese bunkers on the reverse slopes of that enemy-held height.

The tanks of Task Force Sturman again concentrated on Hill 851 where the enemy had resisted every effort of the 23rd Infantry to reach the crest.

As nightfall descended on the rugged peaks, the 23rd Infantry launched a night attack on Hill 851. The North Koreans threw arcs of fire down the slopes, adding hand grenades as the attackers pressed upward. The battle raged throughout the night and at 0530, the First and French Battalions summoned their last reserves of strength and launched a final assault on the crest. Digging upward in face of murderous enemy fire, they managed to throw the defenders from their peak and by 0630 they were in possession of the long-sought crest. For more than a month, the 23rd Infantry had battered against the enemy on this northernmost height of *Heartbreak Ridge*. Once it had been in their hands for a few hours until a powerful counterattack forced them back. Now it was again in their possession and this time it was theirs to keep.

Reconnaissance of *Heartbreak Ridge* after its capture revealed why it had been so hard to take. Hill 931 itself was the center peak of three that were within small arms range of each other. While continuing to hold it the enemy could put down well aimed and observed fire on the neighboring two peaks. But what added even more to its strength for the North Korean defenders was the fact that its slope on the eastern side facing the 2nd Division troops was rocky and almost perpendicular for the last 250 to 300 yards. Ascent by foot troops was necessarily slow. On the reverse or western side, the slope was less steep and was of dirt. Into this slope, the enemy had dug his many bunkers of such strength as to resist even a direct hit from our 105 mm howitzers. These bunkers, only twenty five to thirty five yards from the topographical crest of the hill, were numerous enough to provide complete protection to some 400 to 500 men.

During artillery or air bombardments, the enemy troops would leave their entrenchments and communications trenches on the crest for the protection of their strong bunkers. Yet, when the artillery or air attacks were lifted, they had ample time to return to their positions before our troops could scale the last very steep and rocky 200 to 300 yards on the attacking side.

Heartbreak Ridge had fallen but westward, the First Battalion of the 38th was unable to take Hill 1220 despite the slugging fire support from the regimental tanks in the valley to the north. The attackers dug-in for the night while the Netherlands Detachment, relieved by the 9th Infantry, moved up behind to make the assault the next morning.

The Dutch troops moved out at first light against Hill 841, the peak flanking 974 to the north, and against moderate resistance they were on the crest by 1430 hours.

Simultaneously, the First Battalion made another lunge up to Hill 1220 with fire from all the supporting weapons in the regiment. By 1430 hours, the assault elements were within 250 meters of the crest but further efforts to advance upward were repulsed and the battalion dug-in for the night. The Third Battalion had moved up during the attack and at dusk tied in with the First Battalion on the ridge line leading to 1220.

The first light of dawn was just appearing in the skies on 15 October when the Third Battalion of the 38th Infantry passed through the blocking positions of the First Battalion and moved out to take Hill 1220. Moderate resistance was encountered but by pressing their attack under cover of heavy artillery fire support the attackers were on their objective by midafternoon and soon afterward the newly won hill was secure.

The fall of Hill 1220 brought the Indianhead Division abreast of a new line of defense. Stretching from that peak in the west, it arched eastward across the now quiet peaks of *Heartbreak Ridge*, Hill 1243, and thence into the northern rim of the *Punchbowl*.

The struggle to secure this new line had been one of the most vicious offensive actions the 2nd Division had ever undertaken. The deeds which brought it to a close constituted a shining chapter in the history of the United States Army.

The days following the end of *Operation Touchdown* were relatively quiet. Task Force Sherman continued its end runs into enemy territory as did the 72nd Tank Battalion but the main purpose of these strikes was to divert the enemy from the relief of the Division which was begun on 20 October. Elements of the 7th US Division were already in the 2nd Division area even as *Heartbreak* was falling. By 22 October they were entrenched in the old positions of the 2nd Division and the men wearing the Indianhead patch were headed southward in trucks for a well-earned and much-needed period of reserve after 103 days of continuous combat.

The period just completed was truly one of heartaches as well as of *Heartbreaks*, but even more for the communists than us. The V North Korean Corps had been destroyed and replaced by the 24th CCF Army. The II North Korean Corps had also been decimat-

ed. On *Heartbreak Ridge* the 23rd Infantry had captured prisoners from six communist regiments. And all of this was taking place during the period when the truce talks had been suspended. Soon after these successes by the 2d Division, the communists agreed to resume the truce talks.

The sacrifices could not have been in vain if they were the moving factor in convincing the communists that their military defeat in battle was inevitable.

The autumn leaves were falling from the trees in the valleys north of Chunchon and Kapyong when the convoys bearing the 2d Division rolled to a stop. Tents were pitched, stoves were lit against the new cold, and plans were made for rugged training to bring the Division once again to its peak of combat efficiency.

South in Pusan and southwest at Inchon, heavily loaded ships arrived daily bringing new men to fill the ranks of the 2d Division. Waiting to occupy the berths on these now outbound vessels were the men who had earned ten times over the right to return to their homelands.

No one could say what the future had in store. The winds from North Korea brought the first bite of winter and also the sounds of continued battle. The frost which covered the ground in the early morning failed to hide the scars of war. Only the men around the conference tables and those who guided them could make the final decisions. But the men who trained from dawn to dusk and on into the night were preparing to give pointed evidence to the negotiators that whatever the future held, the 2nd United States Infantry Division was ready.

The New Crusades - Chapter 23

Kim Jong Il had to explode his little bomb, didn't he? An early report said it was more fizz than bang and measured the explosion as equal to 550 tons of TNT. Hiroshima was 13,000 tons of TNT, about 24 times more powerful. Nagasaki was even more powerful at 21,000 tons – 38 times more powerful. My first thought was the rocket that exploded 30 seconds into its flight.

Up to the point of the terrorist bombings, those two bombs had been the only two ever employed in a war. Throughout the Cold War, the 5 nuclear powers built their inventories and 1 non-nuclear power did the same. South Africa built weapons and apparently dismantled them. The next two nuclear powers were India and Pakistan, we still didn't count Israel. Then Iran and North Korea tried to become nuclear powers, raising the official total to 9 + 1. The way I heard it, Saudi Arabia bought 3 and Iran also bought some, using their nuclear development program as a cover.

That made 8 official nuclear powers and 3 unofficial nuclear powers, Israel, Saudi Arabia and Iran. Considering the state of the North Korean economy, the greatest fear was that they would build and sell weapons to terrorists. The same concern had been voiced over Iran; and of course, Israel didn't have nuclear weapons. Syria and Lebanon had to push the issue and attack Israel. Israel responded with conventional weapons, not wanting to let the Genie out of the bottle.

Eventually some of those nuclear weapons made it to the US and we lost 7 cities. If that wasn't enough, WW III went hot and we found ourselves in Fredonia, Arizona shooting Muslims extremists taking a shortcut to Salt Lake City. We won, they lost and I was no longer a combat virgin, which is not the same as a combat veteran. One firefight doesn't make a person a veteran, that's takes several I'd have been perfectly happy not to have become a veteran, especially at my age. Wish in one hand and spit in the other and see which one fills the fastest.

The only thing I couldn't figure out was how they were getting around in all the snow. It wasn't as bad as the previous year although we had plenty. The upside of the snow was that it would probably melt slowly and refill the aquifers, we needed it. I was faced with a problem, the battery in my wheelchair died. Naturally, I added it to the list for our first spring shopping trip. I also inventoried our medical supplies and we had burned through our prescription drugs despite having raided pharmacies. We needed more antibiotics, not everyone had come through the firefight without a scratch. We had 2 dead and 7 wounded. However, we had some drugs and medical professionals to care for our wounded and they all survived.

But, one man lost a leg and would need a wheelchair too. If we could get me a tactical wheelchair, from Kansas or anywhere, I'd take it and give him mine, complete with a new battery. However, that would wait for spring and in the meantime, he'd have to build his muscles using a conventional wheelchair.

Twice more during the course of the winter a Red Alert call went out. Twice more we turned out and defended Fredonia against people who insisted on using the shortcut to I-15. One group was a group of Mexicans, possibly from the Nation of Aztlán. The other group all seemed to be Seven-Eleven employees, ergo, Iranians. I can assure you they had one thing in common with the first group, they were 6' under. We lost 7 killed in the attack by the NOA and 4 killed in the attack of the Seven-Eleven employees. They were probably looking for more potato chips and beer.

It wasn't like people hadn't been warned. We have disasters all of the time, all that changes is the degree. An F-2 tornado isn't nearly the size of a F-5 and a category 4 hurricane doesn't happen every day, but both happen. Kalifornia is earthquake heaven, they have several every day. In the spring, we get floods and in the winter, severe winter storms, any one of which can take out your power and prevent you from getting needed fuel for your furnace. We've been getting ready for a nuclear war since Russia exploded it first nuclear weapon.

I also wondered if they were still working on building CVN-21, formally named CVN-78 Gerald Ford. The George H. W. Bush was the last of the Nimitz class, but it was hybrid, testing many of the new systems to be included in the Ford. Probably not, but I would have liked to see that ship. The lead ship in the class was supposed to use electromagnetic launchers replacing the current launch system. The new system made the airplanes last longer.

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I'm one man who can't be accused of discrimination, I dislike everyone. I don't like Iranians, but my doctor in Kalifornia was from Iran. I don't care for Mexicans because they won't speak English (although most of them can) and I really don't like gangsters of any persuasion. I've had a Muslim friend, a Hispanic friend, a Black friend, a Jewish friend, a Japanese friend and yes, Virginia, even a Canadian friend.

However, that doesn't mean that I like Iran, Venezuela, Somalia, the current leader of Israel or even the former Prime Minister of Canada. I tried to learn Spanish and French, but never got past Como se llama or merci. Hell, I don't even speak British English; you'll have to settle for Iowa English. I did like Tony Blair and even Dubya. In a distant way, I'm, the Billy Mitchell of preparedness, except a few people believed me and prepared. That didn't necessarily mean they bought a M1A rifle or even a M1911, but a SKS will kill you just as dead. Buying a M1A rifle is a very pricey affair; you have to be in love with the rifle to spend \$1,760 for the next to bottom model, the Loaded. But wait, there's more to the Billy Mitchell bit. In the movie, *The Court-Martial of Billy Mitchell*, Gary Cooper played Billy Mitchell and I was named after Gary Cooper. Some of you might not know who he was, he died in 1961. Think *High Noon*.

We had seen neither hide nor hair of the government, which depending upon one's viewpoint could be good or bad. If you were waiting for them to rescue you, it was bad and you're illiterate or had never heard of New Orleans. On the other hand, if you been

salvaging, especially from a military depot, maybe it was just as well, they'd probably want their machine guns back. They couldn't have them, they were salvage and the rule is: finders – keepers. I suppose we could give them the bullets back, one at a time.

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ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP) – In Alaska's native villages, the punishing winter cold is already penetrating the walls of the lightly insulated plywood homes, many of the villagers are desperately poor, and heating-oil prices are among the highest in the nation.

And yet a few of the small communities want to refuse free heating oil from Venezuela, on the patriotic principle that no foreigner has the right to call their president *the devil*.

The heating oil is being offered by the petroleum company controlled by Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez, President Bush's nemesis. While scores of Alaska's Eskimo and Indian villages say they have no choice but to accept, others would rather suffer.

"As a citizen of this country, you can have your own opinion of our president and our country. But I don't want a foreigner coming in here and bashing us," said Justine Gunderson, administrator for the tribal council in the Aleut village of Nelson Lagoon.

"Even though we're in economically dire straits, it was the right choice to make."

Nelson Lagoon residents pay more than \$5 a gallon for oil – or at least \$300 a month per household – to heat their homes along the wind-swept coast of the Bering Sea, where temperatures can dip to minus 15. About one-quarter of the 70 villagers are looking for work, in part because Alaska's salmon fishing industry has been hit hard by competition from fish farms.

The donation to Alaska's native villages has focused attention on the rampant poverty and high fuel prices in a state that is otherwise awash in oil – and oil profits. In 2005, 86 percent of the Alaska's general fund, or \$2.8 billion, came from oil from the North Slope.

The Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association, a native nonprofit organization that would have handled the heating oil donation on behalf of 291 households in Nelson Lagoon, Atka, St. Paul and St. George, rejected the offer because of the insults Chavez has hurled at Bush.

Chavez called Bush *the devil* in a speech to the United Nations last month. He has also called the president a terrorist and denounced the war in Iraq.

Dimitri Philemonof, president and chief executive of the association, said accepting the aid would be "compromising ourselves." "I think we have some duty to our country, and I think it's loyalty," he said.

Over the past two years, Citgo, the Venezuelan government's Texas-based oil subsidiary, has given millions of gallons of discounted heating oil to the poor in several states and cities – including New York, Connecticut, Vermont, Rhode Island, Maine and Massachusetts – in what is widely seen as an effort by Chavez to embarrass and irritate the US government and make himself look good.

Maine Gov. John Baldacci, who approved an agreement last winter to buy discounted oil, said he had no plans this year to seek a similar arrangement. In Boston, Massachusetts, a City Council member wants a landmark Citgo sign near Fenway Park taken down and replaced with an American flag. In Florida, a lawmaker asked the state to cancel Citgo's exclusive contract to sell fuel at turnpike service stations.

About 150 native villages in Alaska have accepted money for heating oil from Citgo. The oil company does not operate in Alaska, so instead of sending oil, it is donating about \$5.3 million to native nonprofit organizations to buy 100 gallons this winter for each of more than 12,000 households.

“When you have a dire need and it is a matter of survival for your people, it doesn't matter where, what country, the gift or donation comes from,” said Virginia Commack, an elder in the arctic village of Ambler, an impoverished Eskimo community of 280 where residents are paying \$7.25 a gallon for fuel.

For years, Alaska natives have accused the state and federal governments of sending too little money to their tiny, far-flung communities, where fuel and grocery prices are bloated by the high costs of delivery by plane and barge.

An editorial last month in the Anchorage Daily News bashed the Legislature's rejection in March of an \$8.8 million state supplement to a federal program that helps poor Alaskans with home heating costs.

“It's embarrassing that residents in a state with so much oil wealth should be looking to a foreign nation for help,” the newspaper said. “It's hard to blame villagers for accepting the gift.”

A spokesman for Gov. Frank Murkowski, John Manly, said the governor believes Chavez's donation is a ploy to undermine Americans' faith in their government. But he said it is up to each village to make its own decision.

“It seems like a very strange irony that we produce the oil and yet every year there seems to be a chronic problem in getting the fuel to people that need it,” Manly said. Joan Eddy, principal and teacher at Nelson Lagoon's school, said most buildings in town were erected 30 to 40 years ago, which makes them pretty old, considering how they get battered by the constant 20-25 mph wind coming off the ocean. Their heating systems are aging, too.

She noted the fuel barge is late arriving this year, and said residents are turning on their furnaces for only a few hours in the morning and at night.

“We’re conserving as much as we can because we are concerned. It looks like it’s going to be a snowy winter and cold,” she said.

There are still some patriots left in the country, even if they’re Eskimos. Which only goes to show that not everyone can be bought off by cheap oil.

The New Crusades – Epilog

(CNN) – UN Security Council members will resume closed-door discussions Tuesday of US-proposed sanctions against North Korea over its claimed nuclear test.

The resumption of talks at the United Nations comes as America's lead negotiator on North Korean issues urged sanctions that are tough enough to show North Korean leader Kim Jong Il that he made a "very, very costly" mistake if a test was indeed carried out.

"He is going to really rue the day that he made this decision," said Assistant Secretary of State Chris Hill Monday in an interview with CNN.

The US proposals include cargo inspections and an embargo on goods that could be used in Pyongyang's missile and nuclear programs.

North Korea's announcement triggered widespread international condemnation and set off alarm bells in neighboring capitals.

On Tuesday, South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun said his country would reconsider its policy of engagement with the North, according to a report from the Reuters news service.

Australia said it would impose various measures on North Korea, including curtailing visas and supporting any UN sanctions. Japan said it was weighing stricter economic sanctions against its isolated neighbor.

Even close North Korea ally China signaled its dismay by telling a visiting South Korean envoy that Beijing appears ready to drop opposition to tough UN sanctions.

"China seems to have a different position than it had before on a Chapter 7 resolution," South Korea's nuclear envoy Chun Young-woo told The Associated Press.

However, a North Korean official said Pyongyang would return to international arms talks and abandon its atomic program if the US takes "corresponding measures," South Korea's Yonhap news agency reported Tuesday.

On Monday, after speaking with the leaders of China, South Korea, Russia and Japan, US President George W. Bush condemned what he termed a "provocative act" – and bluntly warned North Korea against trying to export its nuclear know-how.

The president said he assured the leaders of Japan and South Korea, both close US allies, that the United States "will meet the full range of our deterrent and security commitments" to them. However, Bush insisted the United States "remains committed to diplomacy" to settle the dispute.

Analysis shows small explosion

Meanwhile, scientific analysis of an explosion, which North Korea said was a successful nuclear test, raised questions about the claim.

The apparent nuclear test was conducted at 10:36 am Monday in Hwaderi near Kilju city, South Korea's Yonhap news agency reported citing defense officials.

US, French and South Korean experts estimated that the power of the explosion, about 240 miles northeast of Pyongyang, was equivalent to about 500 metric tons of TNT, which a senior U.S. intelligence community official said was unusually small for a nuclear blast.

By comparison, nuclear tests in 1998 by India and Pakistan were about 24 to 50 times as powerful, according to the Federation of American Scientists.

Also, the small size of Monday's explosion may make it difficult for geological sensors to pick up radioactive emissions that would effectively confirm a nuclear test – raising the possibility that the international community may never know for sure whether North Korea actually has a working nuclear bomb.

Despite the ambiguity, Hill said US officials “have to work under the assumption that North Korea did what it said it was doing” and push for a tough sanctions resolution at the UN Security Council.

“We're just not going to accept that North Korea, with its starving population, is going to be able to join the nuclear club,” Hill said. “We're going to work very hard to make sure North Korea understands the cost of this.”

North Korea recently has test-fired seven missiles, including a long-range ballistic missile in July, but it's unknown whether Pyongyang possesses the high-technology expertise to construct a nuclear device small enough for a missile delivery system.

US Security Council debate sanctions

The Security Council Monday unanimously condemned North Korea's announcement, and diplomats began hashing out the details of a sanctions resolution.

A draft proposed by the United States calls for an international embargo on any goods or materials that could be used in North Korea's missile and nuclear programs, as well as inspections of cargo going into and out of the country.

It would also prohibit financial transactions that might support missile activities, freeze assets related to North Korea's weapons program, impose a ban on luxury goods and take steps to prevent counterfeiting by the Pyongyang regime.

The sanctions would be approved under Chapter 7 of the UN Charter, which would make them binding on all UN members.

In addition, Japan has proposed denying North Korean ships and planes permission to travel outside the country, banning imports of North Korean products and a prohibiting international travel by high-level North Korean officials.

While senior US officials said there appeared to be "substantial" support for "strong sanctions," it remains unclear whether Russia and China – which hold veto power on the Security Council and have voiced opposition to U.N. sanctions on Iran for its nuclear program – would go along with a tough punishment for North Korea.

The US ambassador to the United Nations, John Bolton, said the early reaction by Russia and China to the strong US approach was "positive."

"I think they were taken by surprise by this test," Bolton said. "I think they realize how unacceptable this is."

China role seen as critical

Hill said the US view is that China – as North Korea's neighbor and long-time patron – will be key to getting a meaningful sanctions regime passed, and he expressed optimism that could happen, given the strongly worded rebuke the Chinese government offered after North Korea's announcement.

"China is clearly, clearly upset," Hill said. "The Chinese have indicated they're going to work with us in New York, and we'll see what we get. But I think we can get something that will be far more than just some sort of angry letter. I can assure you of that."

However, Hill stressed that the United States would be working with the international community on a response and would not act unilaterally.

North Korea's UN ambassador, Pak Kil-yon, said Monday that the council should "congratulate" his country's scientists and researchers on their achievement, instead of issuing what he called "notorious, useless and reckless resolutions."

Pak said the test was "very, very successful" and will contribute "to the maintenance and guarantee of peace and security in the (Korean) peninsula and the region."

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I was glad those Seven-Eleven employees showed, it's pretty hard to have a one-sided Crusade. A natural born hero like me would probably get shot in the butt and that would ruin my image. I guess that's why the Corps didn't tell the real story of the Mayaguez incident. You can look it up on Wiki, but what you'll see is that the mission was rushed and when the Marines evacuated, they left 3 alive Marines behind. It wasn't intentional, rather a miscommunication, but those Marines didn't die well.

If they weren't coming to you, I suggested we try and find them, it would improve our odds considerably and we did have 2 good sniper rifles, the Super Match and the Tac-50. We also had all that stuff that my boys recovered from the Navajo Depot, this might be fun, assuming we didn't get killed. With Derek having done his tour in Iraq, I just assumed he might have some ideas for dealing with al Qaeda trained Muslim extremists. Not only were some of them trained, they read American newspapers before TSHTF, and we'd really have to be on our toes.

We discussed it at length and decided to drive back to Kalifornia and look around Glendale and Burbank. Someone had to get the war started and it was easy to blame Muslim Extremists, I was convinced they'd bombed the cities. It wasn't bad enough they moved here, they had to convert Americans like Adam Yahiyeh Gadahn, 28-year-old California native Nicknamed "Azzam the American".

I told John we were going hunting, if he wanted to assume we were hunting for deer or elk that was fine with me. I was pretty sure if we told what we were hunting, he'd object. There were considerations about going into a nuclear fallout zone; we took KIO_3 for the radioactive iodine-131 and some pharmaceutical grade Prussian blue to help us eliminate any cesium-137. Since the Prussian blue could cause constipation, we took a few packages of Bisacodyl, a laxative along. The KIO_3 protects you by packing your thyroid with iodine while the Prussian blue is used to treat thallium poisoning and radio cesium poisoning. It works by combining with thallium and radio cesium in the intestines. The combination is then removed from the body through the stools. By removing the thallium or radio cesium, the medicine lessens damage to your body's organs and tissues.

One thing a person could do was to wear either a gas mask or perhaps an N-100 dust mask. If you didn't ingest the cesium-137, it couldn't hurt you. Caesium-137 is a radioactive isotope which is formed mainly by nuclear fission. It has a half-life of 30.23 years, and decays by pure beta to a metastable nuclear isomer of barium-137. Barium-137 has a half-life of 2.55 minutes and is responsible for all of the gamma ray emission. The ground state of barium-137 is stable. Small amounts of Cs-134 and Cs-137 were released into the environment during nuclear weapon tests and some nuclear accidents, most notably the Chernobyl disaster. As of 2005, Cs-137 is the principal source of radiation in the exclusion zone around the Chernobyl power plant. Together with caesium-134, iodine-131, and strontium-90, it was between the most important isotopes regarding health impacts after the reactor explosion.

What started out to be a 'good' idea quickly proved to be a nightmare. When we arrived in Needles, the Kalifornia Department of Agriculture had the inspection stations manned

with guards carrying M16s. It was right out of 'Grapes of Wrath' and we couldn't get in. They didn't seem to be stopping anyone leaving, just those who wanted in.

"Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord:
He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored;
He hath loosed the fateful lightning of His terrible swift sword:
His truth is marching on."

In case you're wondering, that where John Steinbeck got the title of his book. I had seen a saying on the forum and saw a Latin expression. I was curious what it meant and looked it up.

Si jeunesse savait, si vieillesse pouvait – If love can kill people, hatred can also save them – right, we'll hug them to death.

We went back to Fredonia and sat down to wait for them to come to us. It was hard to say who 'them' might be, these were hard times and once in a while, I pick up a report of another town being grabbed, the men killed, the women and teenaged girls being abused and some of the teen aged boys as well. We set off to the towns but always arrived after the marauders had left. I pinned a map on the wall and began adding pins to track the movements of the group, just like the guy did on that TV show, Jericho. While they didn't appear to be heading directly to Fredonia, we were in their general direction of travel.

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Before TSHTF, a friend pointed out, 'see how much your life is becoming like your stories'. I wrote back, 'God, I hope not'. That's what I get for being a Methodist, God wasn't listening. I took his advice and got the heck out of the PRK. He went to a place to buy wheat and it was nearly \$14 per 50 pound bag. Australia's wheat harvest in 2006 had been down to about half the previous year. I had written about the rice crop in Louisiana in a previous story pointing out that because of Katrina, much of the rice growing area was flooded.

Late in 2006, the weather was awful with 2' of snow in Buffalo, NY on October 13th. The sun was shining in Palmdale. I'll bet that no one in Buffalo thought that 6 weeks later terrorists would strike seven major US cities. Back at that time, we were busting our butts because it wasn't a question of IF, only WHEN. Surprise, surprise, surprise, we weren't expecting anything on Black Friday except to do a little shopping.

We all know that BOB is a Bug out Bag, but, did you know it's also called a GOOD bag for Get Out Of Dodge? The day before that snowstorm, one of the news stations, probably Fox, had a piece about evacuating major cities, including all of the seven cities the terrorists hit. Exit Capacity is an estimate of the ability of routes leading out of the urban area to accommodate the evacuating population. The evaluation standard is a 12-hour

theoretical exit route capacity or a 50 percent capacity with full use of contra-flow operations (all lanes in the outward direction).

GRADE: A

1 Kansas City 90.0

GRADE: B

2 Columbus 82.3

3 Memphis 80.5

4 Pittsburgh 80.4

GRADE: C

5 Indianapolis 79.2

6 Cincinnati 79.0

7 Cleveland 74.5

8 Orlando 74.1

9 San Antonio 73.5

10 St. Louis 70.6

11 Dallas-Fort Worth 70.5

GRADE: D

12 New Orleans 67.3

13 Austin 66.2

14 Providence 65.9

15 Milwaukee 65.2

16 Baltimore 62.6

17 Sacramento 60.3

GRADE: F

18 Denver 59.8

19 Tampa-St. Petersburg 58.9

20 Virginia Beach 57.4

21 Houston 54.8

22 Boston 49.4

22 Philadelphia 49.4

24 Atlanta 48.1

25 Portland 47.7

26 Minneapolis-St. Paul 47.5

27 Las Vegas 47.4

28 Detroit 47.3

29 Washington 44.9

30 Phoenix 43.6

31 Seattle 39.9

32 San Diego 37.8

33 San Francisco-San Jose 37.2

34 Miami 36.9

35 New York 31.5
36 Chicago 28.0
37 Los Angeles 25.6

I'm inclined to ask, where do YOU live? New York City, Los Angeles, Las Vegas, Chicago, Miami, Washington DC and Boston all failed, and that presumed an organized evacuation using maximum exit capacity.

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I can report one thing, when it came, we were barely ready. Think in terms of the film on your teeth, that's how ill prepared we were. Still, we were better off than most of the people in Palmdale. In Fredonia, it was more even; many of those Mormons actually followed the Church's teachings. You probably would too if you were a long way from a major city. I still wanted to go hunt down some Muslims but Derek suggest I wait, if all I wanted to do was shoot someone stay home, they'd come to us.

"Are you sure?"

"Damn right I am."

"What's going on, you don't cuss?"

"How could you stand to live in that place?"

"Where?"

"The People's Republik of Kalifornia?"

"Actually, I didn't plan on staying there. But then we bought the house and more or less got trapped. When I went running around, Sharon took a loan on our paid for house to fix the place up."

"Did it need it?"

"Yes and no. It needed some repairs but it didn't need the kitchen remodeled. Then, after I got back we were behind the eight ball, but I held out.

"But you refinanced it right?"

"Yeah, when the interest rate got down to 6% we did and took out more money to get us out behind the 8 ball."

"But you got behind the 8 ball again."

“Well yeah, my prescriptions cost a grand a month and I couldn’t get samples for everything and we just got behind. After the terrorist attack there was a bit of a housing shortage and we were able to bail out.”

“Why did you come here? This place is in the middle of nowhere.”

“Think about what you just said, Derek. That’s what I wanted, out of Kalifornia and out in the middle of nowhere so when the inevitable happened we were unlikely to have to put up with bad guys.”

“What went wrong?”

“I didn’t realized that Alt 89 was a shortcut to I-15. A friend recommended this town and told me to emphasize I was from Iowa and not from the PRK.”

“Well, I guess you could have done worse.”

“Kid I’ve written almost 50 stories and let me tell you, no matter where you pick to live you going to have some people who’d rather steal than work for a living. This gardening and farming is nothing but hard work. Then you end up riding a horse named Salina and pray she doesn’t run away with you.”

“Get a different horse.”

“It wouldn’t matter, they all know I’m afraid of horses, I think they can smell the fear.”

“Then don’t ride a horse.”

“Our supply of fuel isn’t unlimited until we can start producing biodiesel, so I guess for now I don’t have a lot of choice. Even then, the vehicles will eventually wear out and we won’t be able to get parts. I think what I really need is a buggy, like Doc Adams used on Gunsmoke.”

“Fine, we’ll find you one. Will that solve the problem?”

“It will if you can figure out how to equip it with a gun rack and get a deaf horse to pull it.”

“Why a deaf horse?”

“So it won’t bolt if I have to fire a gun.”

“How many guns do you want in your gun rack?”

“All of them and plenty of ammo for each.”

“We may have to get you something bigger than a regular buggy if you want to carry all of that.”

“Whatever, just work it out and I don’t want a team, just a single horse, maybe a large draft horse. It doesn’t have to be an antique either, just something big enough for Sharon and me and our firearms.”

“How about a wagon?”

“Fine, and be sure it’s equipped with some kind of radio.”

“Where are you going?”

“Just from here to town.”

“You have Spearheads, will they do?”

“Sure.”

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We ended up with 2, a small wagon with a gun rack and rain cover plus a sleigh, also with a gun rack and snow cover. It was a bending of technology, some very current and some from a century before. That was also an apt description of my guns because I had guns whose technology and cartridges covered a span of 100 years.

That was how we managed to survive WW III and the preceding terrorist attacks. Over time, the government got itself organized and was able to assemble and distribute food and later fuel. It came in spurts at first, but later they organized regular deliveries. I think they must have thought we were Amish when they pulled in at first, most were riding horses or riding in buggies. We didn’t have a large supply of razor blades and most of the men grew beards. Our clothes were mostly homemade by then because the store bought clothes had worn out.

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